AN

ESSAY

In DEFENCE of the

FEMALE SEX.

In a LETTER to a LADY.

Written by a Lady.

The FOURTH EDITION, Corrected.

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Ans
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TO HER

ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

PRINCESS *ANNE*

OF

DENMARK.

MADAM,

IF *in adventuring to lay this little Piece at your Highneſs's Feet, and humbly to beg your Royal Protection of it, I have preſum'd too far, be pleas'd*

to impute it to your own moſt gracious Goodneſs, the Knowledge of which encourag'd me. Our Sex are by Nature tender of their own Off-ſpring, and may be allow'd to have more Fondneſs for thoſe of the Brain than any other; becauſe they are ſo few, and meet with ſo many Enemies at their firſt Appearance in the World. I hope therefore to find Pardon, if, like an indulgent Parent, I have endeavour'd to advance my Firſt-born, by entring it very early into your Highneſs's Service.

I HAVE *not preſum'd to approach your Highneſs out of any Confidence in the Merits of this Eſſay, but of the Cauſe which it pleads, wherein the Honour of the*

whole

whole Sex ſeem'd to exact of me no leſs a Patronage than that of the Beſt, as well as Greateſt among 'em, whom they are all ambitious to ſee at their Head. I have only endeavour'd to reduce the Sexes to a Level, and by Arguments to raiſe Ours to an Equality at moſt with the Men: But your Highneſs, by Illuſtrious Example, daily convinces the World of our Superiority; and we ſee with Wonder, Vertues in you, Madam, *greater than your Birth. In this I am peculiarly happy, that I am exempted from the common Task of other Dedicators, who lie under an Obligation of publiſhing to the World thoſe Excellencies of their Patrons, which perhaps appear no where but in their Epiſtles. In me it were as*

great Folly to pretend to make known the Illuſtrious Qualities of your Highneſs, as it would be to go about to demonſtrate by Argument, that the Sun ſhin'd to a Crowd that are warm'd by the Influence of it.

I HAD *attempted the Character of a conſummate Woman; could I, tho' but faintly, have ſhadow'd the inimitable Graces of your Highneſs; but the Impoſſibility of that Task forc'd me to deſiſt. It were eaſy here to launch into thoſe glorious Particulars, which, affirmed of any other than your Royal Highneſs, would have been Extravagance of Flattery; but to you Injuſtice, and in me the higheſt Preſumption, to attempt with my feeble*

ble Hand those Perfections which the ablest must fall infinitely short of. The Lustre of your Royal Vertues, Madam, *like the Sun, gives us Warmth and Light; and while at a modest Distance we admire it, improves our Sight, which too bold a View confounds; yet the Meanest and most Ignorant see those Glories, which the most exquisite Artist can never express. The World therefore will rather justify than condemn my Conduct, if I do not wrong so bright an Original with a dark obscure Copy.*

MADAM, *Tho' the World may condemn my Performance, it must applaud my Choice in this Address, and own, that had I known as well how to Argue as to Instance, I must*

infallibly have triumph'd over all Oppoſition. It may be eaſy to evade or baffle the Force of my Arguments, but it is impoſſible, without the utmoſt Stupidity and Injuſtice, to deny the manifeſt Advantages of thoſe Illuſtrious Graces, which raiſe your Highneſs ſo far above theirs, as well as your own Sex. In this I have imitated the Conduct of prudent Generals, who, when they doubt the Sufficiency of their Strength, retire to ſome ſtrong Fort, and reſt ſecure under the Protection of it.

THERE *is yet another Reaſon,* MADAM, *which tho' the leaſt juſtifiable, was neverthleſs moſt prevalent with me to devote this Eſſay to your Highneſs. My Ambition*

bition to ſhew the profound Reſpects I have always had for your Highneſs, would not ſuffer me to let ſlip any Occaſion of expreſſing it, even tho' I bluſh for the Meanneſs of it. Thus I find my ſelf reduc'd by my Zeal to the Condition of poor Tenants, who muſt expoſe their Poverty, to ſhew their Affection to their Lord in a worthleſs Preſent. I am ſenſible of the Raſhneſs of my Ambition in aſpiring to the Patronage of your Highneſs, and the Need I have of an Apology; but were I able to make one as I ought, I ſhould have taken Care to have had leſs Occaſion for it. Yet I doubt not, from your Goodneſs, that Indulgence, which I cannot expect from your Juſtice, nor but that you will (like Heaven, whoſe more im-

mediate

mediate Images Princes are) accept my unprofitable Service, for the Sincerity with which it is tender'd. If my unfeign'd Submiſſion may procure Pardon for my Preſumption, that your Happineſs may equal your illuſtrious Vertues, and your Royal Perſon be as far out of the Reach of Fortune, as your Fame and Honour of Detraction, ſhall ever be the Prayers of

MADAM,

Your Royal Highneſs's

Moſt Humble,

Moſt Obedient, and

Moſt Devoted Servant.

THE PREFACE.

PREFACES, to moſt Books, are like Prolocutors to Puppet-Shews; they come firſt to tell you what Figures are to be preſented, and what Tricks they are to play. According therefore to ancient and laudable Cuſtom, I have thought fit to let you know by way of Preface, or Advertiſement, (call it which you pleaſe) that here are many fine Figures within to be ſeen, as well worth your Curioſity as any in *Smithfield* at *Bartholomew-Tide*. I will not deny, Reader, but that you may have ſeen ſome of 'em there already; to

to thoſe that have, I have little more to ſay, than that, if they have a mind to ſee them again in Effigy, they may do it here. What is it you wou'd have? Here are S. *George*'s, *Bateman*'s, *John Dorie*'s, *Punchinello*'s, and the *Creation of the World*; or, what's as good, here's the *German Artiſt* too, or one that can ſhew more Tricks than he: If all this will not invite you, you are grown more ſqueamiſh of late, *Gentlemen*, than you us'd to be.

THIS, one would think, were Preface ſufficient; but there are ſome Men ſo impertinently curious, that they muſt needs have a Reaſon for every thing that is done in the World, tho' it were in their Favour, (for which perhaps it were hard to give a good one) when it were their Intereſt to be ſatisfied and thankful without farther Enquiry. To comply therefore in ſome meaſure with the Humour of theſe People, if any one think fit to peruſe this Book, I muſt tell 'em very freely, that I was ſo far from aiming to oblige or diſoblige 'em by it, that it was never intend-

tended for their View. It was occaſion'd by a private Converſation between ſome Gentlemen and Ladies, and written at the Requeſt, and for the Diverſion, of one Lady more particularly, by whom, with my Conſent, it was communicated to two or three more of both Sexes, my Friends likewiſe.

By them I was with abundance of Compliments, importun'd to make it Publick. Now tho' I do, with good Reaſon, attribute much more of what was ſaid to me upon this Occaſion, to their good Breeding and Friendſhip, than to their real Opinions of my Performance; yet I have ſo much Satisfaction in their Sincerity and Friendſhip, as to be confident they would not ſuffer, much leſs perſuade, me to expoſe to the World any thing, of which they doubted ſo far, as to think it would not be tolerably acceptable. Nor have I leſs Aſſurance of their Judgment and Skill in Things of this Nature: Beſide that I have been inform'd by ſome of 'em, that it has been ſeen and favourably receiv'd by ſome Gentlemen, whom the World

World thinks no incompetent Judges. After all this Encouragement, I ſuppoſe I ſhall not be thought vain, if, as I pretend not to the Applauſe, ſo I fear not the Contempt of the World; Yet I preſume not ſo far upon the Merits of what I have written, as to make my Name publick with it. I have elſewhere held, that Vanity was almoſt the univerſal Mover of all our Actions, and conſequently of mine, as well as of others; yet it is not ſtrong enough in me, to induce me to bring my Name upon the publick Stage of the World.

THERE are many Reaſons that oblige me to this cautious, reſerv'd Way of Procedure; tho' I might otherwiſe be very ambitious of appearing in the Defence of my Sex, cou'd I perſwade myſelf, that I was able to write any thing ſuitable to the Dignity of the Subject, which I am not vain enough to think. This indeed is one Reaſon, becauſe I am ſenſible it might have been much better defended by abler Pens, ſuch as many among our own Sex are; though I believe ſcarce thus much wou'd

wou'd have been expected from me, by thoſe that know me. There is likewiſe another Reaſon, which was yet more prevalent with me and with thoſe few Friends whom I conſulted about it, which is this: There are a ſort of Men, that upon all Occaſions think themſelves more concern'd, and more thought of than they are; and that, like Men that are deaf, or have any other notorious Defect, can ſee no body whiſper or laugh, but they think 'tis at themſelves. Theſe Men are apt to think, that every ridiculous Deſcription they meet with, was intended more particularly for ſome one or other of them; as indeed it is hard to paint any thing complete in their ſeveral Kinds, without hitting many of their particular Features, even without drawing from them. The Knowledge of this, with the Conſideration of the Tenderneſs of Reputation in our Sex, (which as our delicateſt Fruits and fineſt Flowers are moſt obnoxious to the Injuries of Weather, is ſubmitted to every infectious Blaſt of malicious Breath) made me very cautious, how I expos'd mine to ſuch poiſo-

poiſonous Vapours. I was not ignorant, how liberal ſome Men are of their Scandal, whenever provok'd, eſpecially by a Woman; and how ready the ſame Men are to be ſo, tho' upon never ſo miſtaken Grounds. This made me reſolve to keep 'em in Ignorance of my Name; and if they have a Mind to find me out, let 'em catch me (if they can) as Children at Blindman's Buff do one another, hoodwink'd; and, I am of Opinion, I have room enough to put 'em out of Breath before they come near me.

THE Event has in Effect prov'd my Suſpicions prophetick; for there are (as I am inform'd) already ſome, ſo forward to intereſt themſelves againſt me, that they take Characters upon themſelves, before they ſee 'em; and for fear they ſhould want ſome body to throw their Dirt at, with equal Ignorance and Injuſtice father this Piece upon the Gentleman who was ſo kind as to take Care of the Publication of it, only to excuſe me from appearing. This made me once reſolve to oppoſe my Innocence to their Clamour, and prefix my Name,

which

which I thought I was bound to do in Juſtice to him. In this Reſolution I had perſiſted, had not the very ſame Gentleman generouſly perſuaded and over-rul'd me to the contrary, repreſenting how weak a Defence Innocence is againſt Calumny, how open the Ears of the World are, and how greedily they ſuck in any thing to the Prejudice of a Woman; and that (to uſe his own Expreſſion) the Scandal of ſuch Men was like Dirt thrown by Children and Fools at Random, and without Provocation; It would dawb filthily at firſt, though it were eaſily waſh'd off again: Adding, that he deſir'd me not to be under any Concern for him, for he valued the Malice of ſuch Men as little as their Friendſhip; the one was as feeble, as the other falſe.

I SUPPOSE I need make no Apology to my own Sex for the Meanneſs of this Defence; the bare Intention of ſerving 'em will, I hope, be accepted; and of Men, the Candid and Ingenious I am ſure will not quarrel with me for any thing in this little Book, ſince there is nothing in it which was not drawn from the ſtrict-

eſt Reaſon I was Miſtreſs of, and the beſt Obſervations I was able to make, except a Start or two only concerning the *Salique* Law, and the *Amazons;* which, if they divert not the Reader, can't offend him.

I SHALL not trouble the Reader with any Account of the Method I have obſerv'd, he will eaſily diſcover that in reading the Piece itſelf. I ſhall only take notice to him of one thing, which, with a little Attention to what he reads, he will readily find to be true, that is, that the Characters were not written out of any wanton Humour or malicious Deſign, to characterize any particular Perſons, but to illuſtrate what I have ſaid upon the ſeveral Heads under which they are rang'd, and repreſent not ſingle Men, but ſo many Clans or Diviſions of Men, that play the Fool ſeriouſly in the World. If any Individual ſeems to be more peculiarly mark'd, it is becauſe he is perhaps more notorious to the World, by ſome one or more Articles of the general Character here given. I am ſure that there is no Man, who is but moderately acquaint-

quainted with the World, eſpecially this Town, but may find half a Dozen or more Originals for every Picture. After all, if any Man have ſo little Wit as to appropriate any of theſe Characters to himſelf, he takes a Liberty I have hitherto never given him, but ſhall do it now in the Words of a Great Man, *If any Fool finds the Cap fit him, let him put it on.*

THERE are ſome Men (I hear) who will not allow this Piece to be written by a Woman: Did I know what Eſtimate to make of their Judgments, I might perhaps have a higher Opinion of this Trifle, than I ever yet had. For I little thought, while I was writing this, that any Man (eſpecially an ingenious Man) ſhould have the Scandal of being the reputed Author. For he muſt think it ſcandalous to be made to father a Woman's Productions unlawfully. But theſe Gentlemen, I ſuppoſe, believe there is more Wit, than they'll find in this Piece, upon the Credit of the Bookſeller, whoſe Intereſt it is to flatter it. But were it as well written as I could wiſh it, or as the Subject wou'd bear,

and deſerves, I ſee no Reaſon why our Sex ſhould be robb'd of the Honour of it; ſince there have been Women in all Ages, whoſe Writings might vie with thoſe of the greateſt Men, as the preſent Age, as well as paſt, can teſtify. I ſhall not trouble the Reader with their Names, becauſe I wou'd not be thought ſo vain as to rank myſelf among 'em; and their Names are already too well known and celebrated to receive any additional Luſtre from ſo weak Encomiums as mine. I pretend not to imitate, much leſs to rival, thoſe illuſtrious Ladies, who have done ſo much Honour to their Sex, and are unanſwerable Proofs of what I contend for. I only wiſh, that ſome Ladies now among us (whoſe Names I forbear to mention in regard to their Modeſty) wou'd exert themſelves, and give us more Inſtances, who are both by Nature and Education ſufficiently qualified to do it, which I pretend not to. I freely own to the Reader, that I know no other Tongue beſides my Native, except *French*, in which I am but very moderately skill'd. I plead not this to excuſe the Meanneſs

neſs of my Performance; becauſe I know I may reaſonably be ask'd, Why I was ſo forward to write? For that, I have already given my Reaſons above: If they will not ſatisfy the Reader, he muſt endeavour to pleaſe himſelf with better, for I am very little ſolicitous about the matter. I ſhall only add, that for my Good-Will, I hope the Favour of my own Sex, which will ſatisfy my Ambition.

To the moſt Ingenious Mrs--- on her admirable Defence of her Sex.

LOng have we ſung the fam'd Orinda's *Praiſe,*
And own'd Aſtrea's *Title to the Bays.*
We to their Wit have paid the Tribute due,
But ſhou'd be Bankrupt, before juſt to you.
Sweet flowing Numbers, and fine Thoughts they writ;
But you Eternal Truths, as well as Wit.
In them the Force of Harmony we find,
In you the Strength and Vigour of the Mind.
Dark Clouds of Prejudice obſcur'd their Verſe;
You with Victorious Proſe thoſe Clouds diſperſe:
Thoſe Fogs, which wou'd not to their Flame ſubmitt,
Vaniſh before your Riſing Sun of Wit.
Like Stars, they only in themſelves were bright,
The whole Sex ſhines by your reflected Light.
Our Sex have long thro' Uſurpation reign'd,
And by their Tyranny their Rule maintain'd;
Till wanton grown with Arbitrary Sway,
Depos'd by you, they practiſe to obey;
Proudly ſubmitting when ſuch Graces meet,
Beauty by Nature, and by Conqueſt Wit.
For Wit they had on their own Sex entail'd,
Till for yourſelf and Sex you thus prevail'd.
Thrice happy Sex! Whoſe Foes ſuch Pow'r diſarms,
And gives ſuch Luſtre to your native Charms:
Whoſe Nervous Senſe, couch'd in cloſe Method, lies,
Clear as her Soul, and piercing as her Eyes.
If any yet ſo ſtupid ſhou'd appear,
As ſtill to doubt what ſhe has made ſo clear,
Her Beauty's Arguments they would allow,
And to Her Eyes their full Converſion owe;
And by Experiment the World convince
The Force of Reaſon's leſs than that of Senſe.
Your Sex you with ſuch charming Grace defend,
While that you vindicate, you Ours amend:
We in your Glaſs may ſee each foul Defect,
And may not only ſee, but may correct.

In

In vain old Greece *her Sages would compare,*
They taught what Men ſhould be, you what they are,
With doubtful Notions they Mankind perplex'd,
And with unpracticable Precept vex'd.
In vain they ſtrove wild Paſſions to reclaim,
Uncertain what they were, or whence they came.
But you, who have found out their certain Source,
May with a happier Hand divert their Courſe.
Themſelves ſo little did thoſe Sages know,
That to their Failings we their Learning owe.
Their Vanity firſt caus'd 'em to aſpire,
And with fierce Wranglings ſet all Greece *on Fire.*
Thus into Sects they ſplit the Grecian *Youth,*
Contending more for Victory than Truth.
Your Speculations nobler Ends purſue:
They aim not to be Popular, but true.
You with ſtrict Juſtice, in an equal Light,
Expoſe both Wit and Folly to our Sight.
Yet as the Bee, ſecure on Poiſon feeds,
Extracting Honey from the rankeſt Weeds;
So ſafely you in Fools Inſtructors find,
And Wiſdom in the Follies of Mankind.
With purer Waves henceforth ſhall Satyr flow,
And we this Change to your chaſte Labours owe;
Satyr before, from a polluted Source,
Brought Native Filth, augmented in its Courſe.
No longer muddy ſhall thoſe Streams appear,
Which you have purg'd, and made ſo ſweet and clear,
Well may your Wit to us a Wonder ſeem,
So ſtrong's the Current, yet ſo clear the Stream;
Deep, but not dull, thro' each tranſparent Line
We ſee the Gems, which at the Bottom ſhine.
To your Correction freely we ſubmitt,
Who teach us Modeſty, as well as Wit.
Our Sex with Bluſhes muſt your Conqueſt own,
While yours prepare the Garlands you have won.
Your Fame ſecure long as your Sex ſhall laſt,
Nor Time nor Envy ſhall your Laurels blaſt.

JAMES DRAKE.

To Madam ------ on the Occaſion of her Eſſay *in Defence of her Sex.*

I Can't but ſmile at the fantaſtick Malice of ſome that love me not; for their ſpightful Clamour has effected that, which the kind Inſinuations of ſome of my miſtaken Friends in vain attempted, and fixt upon me an Houour, and upon themſelves Characters, they wou'd be glad to claw off again, tho' at the Expence of their Skins. Caprice and Humour have indeed a great Share in the Movements even of the wiſeſt of Mankind; but I never met before with ſuch a frolickſome Piece of Malice, as to ſlander a Man into Reputation.

I am none of the firſt that have ſhin'd by the Luſtre of another's Worth, and valu'd themſelves upon it too: But I believe, *Madam*, you find but few Precedents of Men, that have taken ſo much Pains to undeceive the World to their own Diſadvantage. I have known Men, (and ſo I fancy have you too) and thoſe of no mean Reputation, that have affected to look grave and compos'd at the Repetition of another Man's Jeſt, that it might be taken

taken for their own; and, to ſay Truth, if the World will miſtake Men for greater or wiſer than they are, there are few that have Ingenuity enough not to help on the Cheat. Your Conduct, *Madam*, is very different; you conquer without triumphing, and, like a generous Enemy, ſcorn to inſult o'er thoſe you vanquiſh. You leave the Spoil to ſuch as *S—n*, * You are contented with Victory; they, like Peaſants after the Rout of an Army, come in only to do the Butcherly Execution. Yet thus to keep yourſelf conceal'd, and refuſe the Honour, is a Strain beyond the Gallantry of Romance: There the Knight, tho' he achieves *incognito*, always lifts up his Beaver to receive the Favour and the Compliment. But you, like your Laurels, affect the Shade, and, like the richeſt Jewels, are content to have your Luſtre try'd in the Dark.

* *Another Eſſay. Seſſion of Poets* 96. *Six Characters of a Beau*, &c.

THIS Procedure of yours, *Madam*, eſſentially diſtinguiſhes your Character from that of ſome that malign it. They are ſo unwilling to acknowledge themſelves defeated by you, that they endeavour to force the Honour, tho' unmerited, upon me, and ex-

extremely regretted by them; and diſdain a Chaſtiſement from a Female Hand, tho' too weak to oppoſe it. You draw too well, to have Occaſion to write under your Pieces; for there is ſcarce an eminent Fool in Town, but owns his Picture. Yet ſo far are they from mending for your ſmart Correction, (ſo much *Solomon* is wiſer than Mr. *Dryden*) ſo far from profiting by the Modeſty of your Example, that inſtead of ſuppreſſing their Names to what they write, they are ready upon all Occaſions to put 'em to what others write. Not a *French Journal*, *Mercure*, *Farce*, or *Opera*, can eſcape their Pillaging; ſo violently they affect the Reputation of Wits. Yet the utmoſt they arrive at, is but a ſort of *Jack-a-Lanthorn Wit*, that, like the Sun-ſhine which wanton Boys with Fragments of Looking-Glaſs, reflect in Mens Eyes, dazzles the weak-ſighted, and troubles the ſtrong. Theſe are the Muſes Black-Guard, that, like thoſe of our Camps, tho' they have no Share in the Danger or Honour, yet have the greateſt in the Plunder; that indifferently ſtrip all that lie before 'em, dead or alive, Friends or Enemies. A Stray-Horſe is ſafer in the *Spaniſh* Quarters, than

than an Anonymous Piece, Scene, or Line among them; and they are as unrefunding as a caſt Miſtreſs, and as unacknowledging as a *Dutch* Tradeſman. Whatever they light on, is *Terra incognita*, and they claim the Right of Diſcoverers, that is, of giving their Names to it. They, like the Parſon and Clerk, are the common Godfathers, and anſwer frequently what the true Parents are aſham'd to own: They fancy they make a ſplendid Figure in Print; but, like the *Phoſphorus*, (which the Chymiſts extract from fermented Ordure) with all their Glimmering and Sham-Fire, they retain the Scent (pardon the Homelineſs of the Expreſſion, *Madam*) of the Original Sir-Reverence. Theſe Fellows are in their Humours ſomething a-kin to one (that I once knew) who never met a Man very drunk in an Evening, but he led him to his own Door to diſcharge, that he might in the Morning have the Credit of his Debauchery: So theſe will ſcarce ſuffer any one Scribler to enjoy, undiſputed, the Scandal of his own Nonſenſe.

Methinks, *Madam*, I begin to find the Ambition of an Author creeping upon me, and to feel (like ſome greater

greater Men than myſelf) a ſtrange Itching to forfeit, by ſomething of my own Production, the Reputation I have got by yours. This thing call'd *Reputation*, Madam, is a very unaccountable thing, and baffles a very celebrated Axiom or two of the Schools; for both they give, and they loſe it, who never had, nor ever ſhall have any; like prodigal young Heirs, that ſpend their Eſtates before they come at 'em.

I PERCEIVE, *Madam*, after this way of digreſſing, it were eaſier to tire your Patience than my own; for nothing is more natural (to me at leaſt) than to forget the Deſign we firſt act upon, and write as incoherently as we talk: But whatever that were, I ſhall ſpare you that Trouble at preſent, and only beg the Continuance of your Friendſhip, which ſhall always be eſteem'd an Honour, by

MADAM,

Your moſt humble, and

moſt obliged Servant,

J. D.

THE

Lady's ANSWER.

HOwever impertinent the unjuſt Aſperſions of thoſe that envy you may appear to yourſelf and others; yet, methinks, there is a Sort of Generoſity in it that makes 'em deny me Juſtice with a Compliment: If they will not ſuffer me to own my Triſle, I am at leaſt obliged to 'em, that in aſcribing to you, they confeſs it deſerves a better Author. I am far from imagining, that this was intended as a Civility to me, which was indeed deſign'd as an Injury to you: But it has laid freſh Obligations upon me, ſince it leſſens not their Reſpect, tho' you ſuffer in the Imputation, and let me ſee that you can with all the Gallantry of a Courtier engage in a Friend's Cauſe, and ſcorn the Court-Trick of deſerting it when it grows troubleſome or difficult. 'Tis no ſmall Comfort to me, that I have ſuch a Champion againſt ſuch petty Adverſaries; for tho' a Man can't decently draw his Sword upon every yelping little Cur that barks at him in the Street; yet if they ſnarl too near his Heels, he may ſpurn 'em without Offence to his Gravity. To oppoſe ſuch Fellows in their own Way, were like quarrelling with the common Scavengers, and throwing Filth about to bewray themſelves

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and annoy the Neighbourhood. Such immoral Swine ought to be ſubmitted to the Eccleſiaſtical Cenſure, and do Penance in one clean Sheet, for the filthy Reams they have abus'd the World with.

I ſend you herewith the enclos'd, that you may ſee there are thoſe, that tho' they differ in my Opinion, yet can treat me with good Breeding: The Candor and Ingenuity of this Gentleman, makes me regret his being unknown to me, becauſe it deprives me of the proper Means of Acknowledgment: For tho' I can't in all Points mention'd be convinc'd by his Arguments, yet I muſt confeſs myſelf throughout over-come, and made a Proſelyte to his Civility. I wiſh I had his Leave to make it publick, which I dare not preſume to do without it: I am confident every civil Woman, as well as Man, wou'd think herſelf oblig'd to him, even while he pleads for the Subjection of her whole Sex. If I ſhould ever be induced to proſecute this Subject (which is far from being exhauſted by all that I or others have written upon it) any farther, I ſhou'd think myſelf oblig'd to yield to his Arguments, or produce my own Reaſons for my Diſſent; and ſhall, I am confident, have more Cauſe to bluſh for his Compliments than his Oppoſition.

Here, Sir, Gratitude compels me to return you and him Thanks for thoſe obliging fine things you are pleas'd to ſay of me, tho' they have an Effect on me quite contrary to your Deſign; for, I believe, you generouſly intended to encourage me by 'em; but they have humbled me, by giving ſuch admirable

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Means to meaſure the Diſproportion between how I write, and how I ought to write. I am ſenſible of the native Coarſeneſs of my Metal, (tho' without the Alloy ſome would find in it) and if it has met with general Acceptance, 'tis the Stamp you have put upon it has made it current: Yet, with the Sincerity of a Friend, permitt me to adviſe you againſt my own Intereſt: Let your Complaiſance prevail no more againſt your Opinion, for fear the World ſhould ſuſpect that you had either loſt your Judgment, or alter'd your Standard. 'Tis no vain Opinion of my own Luſtre that makes me ſeek Obſcurity, but a juſt Conſciouſneſs, that like a Glow-worm, 'tis to that only I am beholding for the Notice that is taken of me; and if I affect the Shade, *'tis out of a Fear of diſappearing in the Sunſhine of better Authors. Nor am I without any Apprehenſions, that your obliging Letter, like the Sun let in upon a common Fire, may extinguiſh what it was deſign'd to cheriſh. This Advantage however I reap by being unknown, that I frequently hear, unſuſpected, the unbiaſs'd Opinions of thoſe that criticize upon me, and ſcarce, without Scorn, hear moſt Men pronounce it a Performance above the Ability of a Woman; yet none anſwer the Argument in it to the contrary. But of all the nice Judges, the pleaſanteſt are thoſe that think the Style too Maſculine: But, with their leave, I think I may boldly advance, that let them form themſelves with equal Care, by the ſame Models, and they will no more be able to diſ-*

cern

cern a Man's Style from a Woman's, than they can tell whether this was writen with a Goose-Quill or a Gander's. But I shall not trouble you nor myself any longer about 'em, but leave 'em to the Liberty of their Censure, and only assure you, that I am,

SIR,

Nov. 15. 1696.

Your real Friend

and Servant.

AN ESSAY IN DEFENCE OF THE FEMALE SEX.

THE Converſation we had 'tother day, makes me, *Dear Madam*, but more ſenſible of the Unreaſonableneſs of your Deſire; which obliges me to inform you farther upon a Subject, wherein I have more need of your Inſtruction. The Strength of Judgment, ſprightly Fancy, and admirable Addreſs, you ſhew'd upon that Occaſion, ſpeak you ſo perfect a Miſtreſs of

that Argument, (as I doubt not but you are of any other that you pleaſe to engage in) that whoever would ſpeak or write well on it, ought firſt to be your Scholar. Yet, to let you ſee how abſolutely you may command me, I had rather be your *Eccho*, than be ſilent when you bid me ſpeak, and beg your Excuſe rather for my Failures, than Want of Complaiſance. I know you will not excuſe me for a Plagiary, if I return you nothing but what I have glean'd from you, when you conſider that I pretend not to make a Preſent, but to pay the Intereſt only of a Debt. Nor can you tax me with Vanity, ſince no Importunity of a Perſon leſs lov'd or valu'd by me than yourſelf, could have extorted thus much from me. This Conſideration leaves me no room to doubt but that you will with your uſual Candor pardon thoſe Defects, and correct thoſe Errors, which proceed only from an over-forward Zeal to oblige you, though to my own Diſadvantage.

THE Defence of our Sex againſt ſo many and ſo great Wits, as have ſo ſtrongly attack'd it, may juſtly ſeem a

Task

Task too difficult for a Woman to attempt. Not that I can or ought to yield, that we are by Nature leſs enabled for ſuch an Enterprize, than Men are; which I hope at leaſt to ſhew plauſible Reaſons for before I have done: But becauſe, through the Uſurpation of Men, and the Tyranny of Cuſtom, (here in *England* eſpecially) there are at moſt but few who are by Education, and acquir'd Wit or Letters, ſufficiently qualify'd for ſuch an Undertaking. For my own part, I ſhall readily own, that as few as there are, there may be and are abundance, who in their daily Converſations approve themſelves much more able and ſufficient Aſſertors of our Cauſe, than myſelf; and I am ſorry that either their Buſineſs, their other Diverſions, or too great Indulgence of their Eaſe, hinder them from doing publick Juſtice to their Sex. The Men, by Intereſt or Inclination, are ſo generally engag'd againſt us, that it is not to be expected that any one Man of Wit ſhould ariſe ſo generous as to engage in our Quarrel, and be the Champion of our Sex againſt the Injuries and Oppreſſions of his own. Thoſe romantick Days are over, and

there is not ſo much as a *Don Quixot* of the Quill left to ſuccour the diſtreſſed Damſels. 'Tis true, a Feint of ſomething of this Nature was made three or four Years ſince by one; but how much ſoever hisEugenia may be oblig'd to him, I am of Opinion the reſt of her Sex are but little beholden to him. For, as you rightly obſerv'd, *Madam*, he has taken more care to give an Edge to his Satyr, than Force to his Apology; he has play'd a ſham Prize, and receives more Thruſts than he makes; and, like a falſe Renegade, fights under our Colours, only for a fairer Opportunity of betraying us. But what could be expected elſe from a Beau? an Animal that can no more commend in earneſt a Woman's Wit, than a Man's Perſon, and that compliments ours only to ſhew his own good Breeding and Parts. He levels his Scandal at the whole Sex, and thinks us ſufficiently fortify'd, if out of the Story of Two Thouſand Years he has been able to pick up a few Examples of Women illuſtrious for their Wit, Learning or Vertue, and Men infamous for the contrary; though I think the moſt inveterate of our Enemies would have

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ſpar'd him that Labour, by granting that all Ages have produc'd Perſons famous or infamous of both Sexes; or they muſt throw up all Pretence to Modeſty or Reaſon.

I HAVE neither Learning nor Inclination to make a Precedent, or indeed any Uſe of Mr. *W.*'s labour'd Common-Place Book; and ſhall leave Pedants and School-Boys to rake and tumble the Rubbiſh of Antiquity, and muſter all the *Heroes* and *Heroins* they can find, to furniſh Matter for ſome wretched Harangue, or ſtuff a miſerable Declamation with, inſtead of Senſe or Argument.

Some Advantages to be allow'd to the Diſparity of Education.

I SHALL not enter into any Diſpute, whether Men or Women be generally more Ingenious or Learned; that Point muſt be given up to the Advantages Men have over us by their Education, Freedom of Converſe, and Variety of Buſineſs and Company. But when any Compariſon is made between 'em, great Allowances muſt alſo be made for the Diſparity of thoſe Circumſtances. Neither ſhall I conteſt about the

Pre-eminence of our Vertues; I know there are too many Vicious, and I hope there are a great many Vertuous of both Sexes. Yet this I may ſay, that whatever Vices are found amongſt us, they have in general both their Source and Encouragement.

THE Queſtion I ſhall at preſent handle is, whether the Time an ingenious Gentleman ſpends in the Company of Women, may juſtly be ſaid to be miſemploy'd, or not? I put the Queſtion in general Terms; becauſe whoever holds the Affirmative, muſt maintain it ſo, or the Sex is no way concern'd to oppoſe him. On the other ſide, I ſhall not maintain the Negative, but with ſome Reſtrictions and Limitations; becauſe I will not be bound to juſtify thoſe Women, whoſe Vices and ill Conduct expoſe them deſervedly to the Cenſure of the other Sex, as well as of their own. The Queſtion being thus ſtated, let us conſider the End and Purpoſes for which Converſation was at firſt inſtituted, and is yet deſirable; and then we ſhall ſee whether they may not all be found in the Company of Women. Theſe Ends,

I take it, are the ſame with thoſe we aim at in all our other Actions; in general only two, Profit or Pleaſure. Theſe are divided into thoſe of the Mind, and thoſe of the Body. Of the latter, I ſhall take no farther Notice, as having no Relation to the preſent Subject; but ſhall confine myſelf wholly to the Mind, the Profit of which is the Improvement of the Underſtanding, and the Pleaſure is the Diverſion and Relaxation of its Cares and Paſſions. Now, if either of theſe Ends be attainable by the Society of Women, I have gain'd my Point. However, I hope to make it appear, that they are not only both to be met with in the Converſation of Women, but one of them more generally, and in greater meaſure than in Mens.

Our Company is generally by our Adverſaries repreſented as unprofitable and irkſome to Men of Senſe; and by ſome of the more vehement Sticklers againſt us, as Criminal. Theſe Imputations, as they are unjuſt, eſpecially the latter, ſo they ſavour ſtrongly of the Malice, Arrogance and Sottiſhneſs of thoſe that moſt frequently urge 'em, who are commonly either conceited

Fops, whoſe Succeſs in their Pretences to the Favour of our Sex has been no greater than their Merit, and fallen very far ſhort of their Vanity and Preſumption; or a ſort of moroſe, ill-bred, unthinking Fellows, who appear to be Men only by their Habit and Beards, and are ſcarce diſtinguiſhable from Brutes, but by their Figure and Riſibility. But I ſhall wave theſe Reflexions at preſent, however juſt, and come cloſer to our Argument. If Women are not qualify'd for the Converſation of ingenious Men, or, to go yet forther, their Friendſhip, it muſt be becauſe they want ſome one Condition, or more, neceſſarily requiſite to either. The neceſſary Conditions of theſe are Senſe, and Good-Nature; to which muſt be added, for Friendſhip, Fidelity and Integrity. Now, if any of theſe be wanting to our Sex, it muſt be either becauſe Nature has not been ſo liberal as to beſtow 'em upon us; or becauſe due Care has not been taken to cultivate thoſe Gifts to a competent meaſure in us.

The firſt of theſe Cauſes is that which is moſt generally urg'd againſt us,

us, whether it be in Raillery, or Spight. I might eaſily cut this Part of the Controverſy ſhort by an irrefragable Argument, which is, that the expreſs Intent and Reaſon for which Woman was created, was to be a Companion and Helpmeet to Man; and that conſequently thoſe that deny 'em to be ſo, muſt argue a Miſtake in Providence, and think themſelves wiſer than their Creator. But theſe Gentlemen are generally ſuch paſſionate Admirers of themſelves, and have ſuch a profound Value and Reverence for their own Parts, that they are ready at any time to ſacrifice their Religion to the Reputation of their Wit; and rather than loſe their Point, deny the Truth of the Hiſtory. There are others, that though they allow the Story, yet affirm that the Propagation and Continuance of Mankind, was the only Reaſon for which we were made; as if the Wiſdom that firſt made Man, cou'd not without Trouble have continu'd that Species by the ſame, or any other Method, had not this been moſt conducive to his Happineſs, which was the gracious and only End of his Creation. But theſe ſuperficial Gentlemen wear

their

their Underſtandings like their Cloaths, always ſet and formal, and wou'd no more talk than dreſs out of Faſhion: Beau's that, rather than any Part of their outward Figure ſhou'd be damag'd, wou'd wipe the Dirt off their Shooes with their Handkerchiefs, and that value themſelves infinitely more upon modiſh Nonſenſe, than upon the beſt Senſe againſt the Faſhion. But ſince I do not intend to make this a Religious Argument, I ſhall leave all farther Conſiderations of this Nature to the Divines, whoſe more immediate Buſineſs and Study it is, to aſſert the Wiſdom of Providence in the Order and Diſtribution of this World, againſt all that ſhall oppoſe it.

No Diſtinction of Sexes in Souls.

To proceed therefore, if we be naturally defective, the Defect muſt be either in Soul or Body. In the Soul it can't be, if what I have heard ſome learned Men maintain be true, that all Souls are equal, and alike, and that conſequently there is no ſuch Diſtinction as Male and Female Souls; that there are no innate *Idea's*, but that all the Notions we have are deriv'd from our external Senſes, either immedi-

mediately, or by Reflexion. These Metaphysical Speculations, I must own, *Madam*, require much more Learning and a stronger Head, than I can pretend to be Mistress of, to be consider'd as they ought: Yet so bold I may be, as to undertake the Defence of these Opinions, when any of our jingling Opponents think fit to refute 'em.

No Advantage in the Organization of their Bodies.

NEITHER can it be in the Body, (if I may credit the Report of learned Physicians) for there is no Difference in the Organization of those Parts which have any Relation to, or Influence over, the Minds; but the Brain, and all other Parts, (which I am not Anatomist enough to name) are contriv'd as well for the plentiful Conveyance of Spirits, which are held to be the immediate Instruments of Sensation, in Women as Men. I see therefore no natural Impediment in the Structure of our Bodies; nor does Experience or Observation argue any: We use all our Natural Faculties, as well as Men, nay, and our Rational too, deducting only for the Advantages before-mention'd.

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Confirm'd from Experience of Brutes.

Let us appeal yet farther to Experience, and obſerve thoſe Creatures that deviate leaſt from ſimple Nature, and ſee if we can find any Difference in Senſe or Underſtanding between Males and Females. In theſe we may ſee Nature plaineſt, who lie under no Conſtraint of Cuſtom or Laws, but thoſe of Paſſion or Appetite, which are Natural, and know no Difference of Education, nor receive any Byaſs by Prejudice. We ſee great Diſtance in Degrees of Underſtanding, Wit, Cunning, and Docility, (call them what you pleaſe) between the ſeveral Species of Brutes. An Ape, a Dog, a Fox, are by daily Obſervation found to be more docile and more ſubtle than an Ox, a Swine, or a Sheep: But a She-Ape is as full of, and as ready at, Imitation, as a He; a Bitch will learn as many Tricks in as ſhort a time as a Dog; a Female Fox has as many Wiles as a Male. A thouſand Inſtances of this kind might be produc'd; but I think theſe are ſo plain, that to inſtance more were a ſuperfluous Labour: I ſhall only once more take notice, that in Brutes and other Animals, there is no Difference betwixt

betwixt Male and Female in point of Sagacity, notwithſtanding there is the ſame Diſtinction of Sexes that is between Men and Women. I have read, that ſome Philoſophers have held Brutes to be no more than meer Machines, a ſort of Divine Clock-Work, that act only by the Force of nice unſeen Springs, without Senſation, and cry out without feeling Pain, eat without Hunger, drink without Thirſt, fawn upon their Keepers without ſeeing 'em, hunt Hares without Smelling, *&c.* Here, *Madam*, is Cover for our Antagoniſts againſt the laſt Argument, ſo thick, that there is no beating 'em out. For my part, I ſhall not envy 'em their Refuge, let 'em lie like the wild *Iriſh*, ſecure within their Boggs; the Field is at leaſt ours, ſo long as they keep to their Faſtneſſes. But to quit this Topick, I ſhall only add, that if the learned'ſt He of 'em all can convince me of the Truth of this Opinion, he will very much ſtagger my Faith; for hitherto I have been able to obſerve no Difference between our Knowledge and theirs, but a gradual one; and depend upon Revelation alone, that our Souls are immortal, and theirs not.

Experience of Mankind.

But if an Argument from Brutes and other Animals ſhall not be allow'd as concluſive, (though I can't ſee why ſuch an Inference ſhould not be valid, ſince the Parity of Reaſon is the ſame on both Sides in this Caſe) I ſhall deſire thoſe that hold againſt us, to obſerve the Country People, I mean the inferior Sort of them, ſuch as not having Stocks to follow Husbandry upon their own Score, ſubſiſt upon their daily Labour. For, amongſt theſe, though not ſo equal as that of Brutes, the Condition of the two Sexes is more level, than amongſt Gentlemen, City-Traders, or rich Yeomen. Examine them in their ſeveral Buſineſſes, and their Capacities will appear equal; but talk to them of things indifferent, and out of the Road of their conſtant Employment, and the Balance will fall on our ſide; the Women will be found the more ready and polite. Let us look a little farther, and view our Sex in a State of more Improvement, amongſt our Neighbours the *Dutch*. There we ſhall find them managing not only the Domeſtick Affairs of the Family, but making and receiving all Payments,

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as well great as ſmall, keeping the Books, ballancing the Accompts, and doing all the Buſineſs, even the niceſt of Merchants, with as much Dexterity and Exactneſs, as their or our Men can do. And I have often heard ſome of our conſidtrable Merchants blame the Conduct of our Countrymen in this Point, that they breed our Women ſo ignorant of Buſineſs; whereas were they taught Arithmetick, and other Arts which require not much bodily Strength, they might ſupply the Places of abundance of luſty Men now employ'd in ſedentary Buſineſs; which might be a mighty Profit to the Nation, by ſending thoſe Men to Employments, where Hands and Strength are more requir'd, eſpecially at this time, when we are in ſuch want of People. Beſide that it might prevent the Ruin of many Families, which is often occaſion'd by the Death of Merchants in full Buſineſs, and leaving their Accompts perplex'd, and embroil'd, to a Widow and Orphans, who underſtanding nothing of the Husband or Father's Buſineſs, occaſions the Rending, and oftentimes the utter Confounding of a fair Eſtate; which

might

might be prevented, did the Wife but underſtand Merchants Accompts, and were made acquainted with the Books.

I HAVE yet another Argument from Nature, which is, that the very Make and Temper of our Bodies ſhew that we were never deſign'd for Fatigue; and the Vivacity of our Wits, and Readineſs of our Invention, (which are confeſs'd even by our Adverſaries) demonſtrate that we were chiefly intended for Thought, and the Exerciſe of the Mind. Whereas on the contrary it is apparent, from the Strength and Size of their Limbs, the Vigour and Hardineſs of their Conſtitutions, that Men were purpoſely fram'd and contriv'd for Action and Labour. And herein the Wiſdom and Contrivance of Providence is abundantly manifeſted; for, as the one Sex is fortified with Courage and Ability, to undergo the neceſſary Drudgery of providing Materials for the Suſtenance of Life in both; ſo the other is furniſh'd with Ingenuity and Prudence for the orderly Management and Diſtribution of it, for the Relief and Comfort of a Family; and is over and above enrich'd with

with a peculiar Tenderneſs and Care requiſite to the cheriſhing their poor helpleſs Off-ſpring. I know our Oppoſers uſually miſ-call our Quickneſs of Thought, Fancy and Flaſh, and chriſten their own Heavineſs by the ſpecious Names of Judgment and Solidity; but it is eaſy to retort upon 'em the reproachful ones of Dulneſs and Stupidity with more Juſtice. I ſhall purſue this Point no farther, but continue firm in my Perſuaſion, that Nature has not been ſo niggardly to us, as our Adverſaries would inſinuate, till I ſee better Cauſe to the contrary, than I have hitherto at any time done. Yet I am ready to yield to Conviction, whoever offers it; which I don't ſuddenly expect.

It remains then for us to enquire, whether the Bounty of Nature be wholly neglected or ſtifled by us, or ſo far as to make us unworthy the Company of Men: Or whether our Education (as bad as it is) be not ſufficient to make us a uſeful, nay, a neceſſary Part of Society for the greateſt Part of Mankind. This Cauſe is ſeldom indeed urged againſt us by the

Men, though it be the only one that gives 'em any Advantage over us in Underſtanding. But it does not ſerve their Pride, there is no Honour to be gain'd by it: For a Man ought no more to value himſelf upon being wiſer than a Woman, if he owes his Advantage to a better Education, and greater Means of Information, than he ought to boaſt of his Courage for beating a Man when his Hands were bound. Nay, it would be ſo far from Honourable to contend for Preference upon this Score, that they would thereby at once argue themſelves guilty both of Tyranny and of Fear: I think I need not have mention'd the latter; for none can be Tyrants but Cowards. For nothing makes one Party ſlaviſhly depreſs another, but their Fear that they may, at one time or other, become ſtrong, or couragious enough to make themſelves equal, if not ſuperior to, their Maſters. This is our Caſe; for Men being ſenſible as well of the Abilities of Mind in our Sex, as of the Strength of Body in their own, began to grow jealous, that we, who in the Infancy of the World were their Equals and Partners in Dominion, might in proceſs of

Women induſtriouſly kept in Ignorance.

of Time, by Subtlety and Stratagem, become their Superiors; and therefore began in good time to make uſe of Force, (the Origine of Power) to compell us to a Subjection Nature never meant; and made uſe of Nature's Liberality to them, to take the Benefit of her Kindneſs from us. From that time they have endeavour'd to train us up altogether to Eaſe and Ignorance; as Conquerors uſe to do to thoſe they reduce by Force, that ſo they may diſarm 'em both of Courage and Wit; and conſequently make them tamely give up their Liberty, and abjectly ſubmitt their Necks to a ſlaviſh Yoke. As the World grew more populous, and Mens Neceſſities whetted their Inventions, ſo it increas'd their Jealouſy, and ſharpen'd their Tyranny over us, till by degrees it came to that Height of Severity, I may ſay Cruelty, it is now at in all the Eaſtern Parts of the World, where the Women, like our Negroes in our Weſtern Plantations, are born Slaves, and live Priſoners all their Lives. Nay, ſo far has this barbarous Humour prevail'd, and ſpread itſelf, that in ſome Parts of *Europe*, which pretend to be moſt refin'd

and civiliz'd, in ſpite of Chriſtianity, and the Zeal for Religion which they ſo much affect, our Condition is not very much better. And even in *France*, a Country that treats our Sex with more Reſpect than moſt do, we are by the *Salique Law* excluded from Sovereign Power. The *French* are an ingenious People, and the Contrivers of that Law knew well enough, that we were no leſs capable of reigning and governing well, than themſelves; but they were ſuſpicious, that if the Regal Power ſhou'd fall often into the Hands of Women, they would favour their own Sex, and might in time reſtore 'em to their Primitive Liberty and Equality with the Men, and ſo break the Neck of that unreaſonable Authority they ſo much affect over us; and therefore made this Law to prevent it. The Hiſtorians indeed tell us other Reaſons, but they can't agree among themſelves, and, as Men, are Parties againſt us, and therefore their Evidence may juſtly be rejected. To ſay the Truth, *Madam*, I can't tell how to prove all this from ancient Records; for if any Hiſtories were anciently written by Women, Time and the Malice of Men have effe-

Original of the Salique Law.

effectually conſpir'd to ſuppreſs 'em; and it is not reaſonable to think that Men ſhou'd tranſmit, or ſuffer to be tranſmitted, to Poſterity, any thing that might ſhew the Weakneſs and Illegality of their Title to a Power they ſtill exerciſe ſo arbitrarily, and are ſo fond of. But ſince daily Experience ſhews, and their own Hiſtories tell us, how earneſtly they endeavour, and what they act and ſuffer, to put the ſame Trick upon one another, 'tis natural to ſuppoſe they took the ſame Meaſures with us at firſt, which now they have effected; like the Rebels in our laſt Civil Wars, when they had brought the Royal Party under, they fell together by the Ears about the Dividend. The Sacred Hiſtory takes no Notice of any ſuch Authority they had before the Flood, and their own confeſs that whole Nations have rejected it ſince, and not ſuffer'd a Man to live amongſt them, which cou'd be for no other Reaſon, than their Tyranny. For, upon leſs Provocation, the Women wou'd never have been ſo fooliſh, as to deprive themſelves of the Benefit of that Eaſe and Security, which a good Agreement with their Men might have

Amazons; why they rejected the Society of Men.

afforded 'em. 'Tis true, the ſame Hiſtories tell us, that there were whole Countries where were none but Men, which border'd upon 'em. But this makes ſtill for us; for it ſhews that the Conditions of their Society were not ſo eaſy, as to engage their Women to ſtay amongſt 'em; but as Liberty preſented itſelf, they withdrew and retired to the *Amazons*. But ſince our Sex can hardly boaſt of ſo great Privileges, and ſo eaſy a Servitude any where as in *England*, I cut this ungrateful Digreſſion ſhort in Acknowledgment; tho' Fetters of Gold are ſtill Fetters, and the ſofteſt Lining can never make 'em ſo eaſy as Liberty.

You will excuſe, I know, *Madam*, this ſhort but neceſſary Digreſſion. I call it neceſſary, becauſe it ſhews a probable Reaſon, why we are at this time in ſuch Subjection to them, without leſſening the Opinion of our Senſe, or Natural Capacities, either at preſent or for the Time paſt; beſide that it briefly lays open, without any Scandal to our Sex, why our Improvements are at preſent ſo diſproportion'd to thoſe of Men. I wou'd not have any of our

our little unthinking Adverſaries triumph at my allowing a Diſproportion between the Improvements of our Sex and theirs; and I am ſure thoſe of 'em that are ingenious Men, will ſee no Reaſon for it from what I have ſaid.

AFTER having granted ſo great a Diſparity as I have already done in the cuſtomary Education, and advantagious Liberties of the Sexes, 'twere Nonſenſe to maintain, that our Society is generally and upon all accounts as beneficial, improving and entertaining, as that of Men. He muſt be a very ſhallow Fellow that reſorts to and frequents us, in hopes, by our Means, to make himſelf conſiderable, as a Scholar, a Mathematician, a Philoſopher, or a Stateſman. Theſe Arts and Sciences are the Reſult only of much Study and great Experience; and without one at leaſt of 'em, are no more to be acquir'd by the Company of Men, however celebrated for any or all of them, than by ours. But there are other Qualifications, which are as indiſpenſably neceſſary to a Gentleman, or any Man that wou'd appear to Advantage in the World,

which are attainable only by Company and Converſation, and chiefly by ours. Nor can the greateſt Part of Mankind, of what Quality ſoever, boaſt much of the Uſe they make, or the Benefit they reap, from theſe acknowledg'd Advantages. So that Scholars only, and ſome few of the more thinking Gentlemen, and Men of Buſineſs, have any juſt Claim to 'em. And of theſe the firſt generally fall ſhort enough ſome other way to make the Balance even. For Scholars, though by their Acquaintance with Books, and converſing much with old Authors, they may know perfectly the Senſe of the learned Dead, and be perfect Maſters of the Wiſdom, be throughly inform'd of the State, and nicely skill'd in the Policies of Ages long ſince paſt; yet by their retir'd and unactive Life, their Neglect of Buſineſs, and conſtant Converſation with Antiquity, they are ſuch Strangers to, and ſo ignorant of, the Domeſtick Affairs and Manners of their own Country and Times, that they appear like the Ghoſts of old *Romans* rais'd by Magick. Talk to them of the *Aſſyrian* or *Perſian* Monarchies, the *Grecian* or *Roman* Common-

Character of a Pedant.

mon-Wealths, they anſwer like Oracles; they are ſuch finiſh'd Stateſmen, that we ſhou'd ſcarce take 'em to have been leſs than Confidents of *Semiramis*, Tutors to *Cyrus* the Great, old Cronies of *Solon* and *Lycurgus*, or Privy-Counſellors at leaſt to the twelve *Cæſars* ſucceſſively: But engage them in a Diſcourſe that concerns the preſent Times, and their Native Country, and they hardly ſpeak the Language of it, and know ſo little of the Affairs of it, that as much might reaſonably be expected from an animated *Egyptian* Mummy. They are very much diſturbed to ſee a Fold or a Plait amiſs in the Picture of an old *Roman* Gown, yet take no notice that their own are threadbare, out at the Elbows, or ragged; and ſuffer more if *Priſcian*'s Head be broken, than if it were their own. They are excellent Guides, and can direct you to every Alley and Turning in old *Rome*; yet loſe their Way at home in their own Pariſh. They are mighty Admirers of the Wit and Eloquence of the Ancients; yet had they liv'd in the Time of *Cicero* and *Cæſar*, wou'd have treated them with as much ſupercilious Pride and Diſreſpect, as they

they do now with Reverence. They are great Hunters of ancient Manuſcripts, and have in great Veneration any thing that has eſcap'd the Teeth of Time and Rats; and if Age has obliterated the Characters, 'tis the more valuable for not being legible. But if by chance they can pick out one Word, they rate it higher than the whole Author in Print, and wou'd give more for one Proverb of *Solomon* under his own Hand, than for all his Wiſdom. Theſe ſuperſtitious, bigotted Idolaters of Time paſt, are Children in their Underſtanding all their Lives; for they hang ſo inceſſantly upon the Leading-ſtrings of Authority, that their Judgments, like the Limbs of ſome *Indian* Penitents, become altogether crampt and motionleſs for want of Uſe.

Character of a Country Squire.

But as theſe Men, will hardly be reckon'd much ſuperior to us upon the account of their Learning or Improvements, ſo neither will I ſuppoſe another Sort, diametrically oppoſite to theſe in their Humours and Opinions: I mean thoſe, whoſe Anceſtors have been wiſe and provident, and rais'd Eſtates by their Ingenuity and Induſtry, and given

given all their Poſterity after 'em Means and Leiſure to be Fools. Theſe are generally ſent to School in their Minority, and were they kept there till they came to Years of Diſcretion, might moſt of 'em ſtay till they could tuck their Beards into their Girdles, before they left carrying a Satchel. In Conformity to Cuſtom, and the Faſhion, they are ſent early to ſerve an Apprenticeſhip to Letters, and for eight or nine Years are whipt up and down, through two or three Countries, from School to School; when being arriv'd at ſixteen or ſeventeen Years of Age, and having made the uſual *Tour* of *Latin* and *Greek* Authors, they are call'd home to be made Gentlemen. As ſoon as the young 'Squire has got out of the Houſe of Bondage, ſhaken off the Awe of Birch, and begins to feel himſelf at Liberty, he conſiders that he is now learned enough, (and 'tis ten to one but his Friends are wiſe enough to be of his Opinion) and thinks it high time to ſhake off the barbarous Acquaintance he contracted with thoſe crabbed, vexatious, obſcure Fellows, that gave him ſo much Trouble and Smart at School, Companions

panions by no means fit for a Gentleman, that writ only to torment and perplex poor Boys, and exerciſe the Tyranny of Pedants and Schoolmaſters. Theſe prudent Reſolutions taken, his Converſation for ſome Years ſucceeding is wholly taken up by his Horſes, Dogs and Hawks, (eſpecially if his Reſidence be in the Country) and the more ſenſleſs Animals that tend 'em. His Groom, his Huntſman, and his Falconer, are his Tutors, and his Walk is from the Stable to the Dog-Kennel, and the Reverſe of it. His Diverſion is Drudgery, and his higheſt Satisfaction when he is moſt tir'd. He wearies you in the Morning with his Sport, in the Afternoon with the noiſy Repetition and Drink, and the whole Day with Fatigue and Confuſion. His Entertainment is ſtale Beer, and the Hiſtory of his Dogs and Horſes, in which he gives you the Pedigree of every one with all the Exactneſs of a Herald; and if you be very much in his good Graces, 'tis odds but he makes you the Compliment of a Puppy of one of his favourite Bitches, which you muſt take with abundance of Acknowledgments of his Civility, or elſe

he

he takes you for a ſtupid, as well as an ill-bred Fellow. He is very conſtant at all Clubs and Meetings of the Country-Gentlemen, where he will ſuffer nothing to be talk'd or heard of, but his Jades, his Curs, and his Kites. Upon theſe he rings perpetual Changes, and treſpaſſes as much upon the Patience of the Company in the Tavern, as upon their Encloſures in the Field, and is leaſt impertinent when moſt drunk.

His grand Buſineſs is to make an Aſſignation for a Horſe-Race, or a Hunting-Match; and nothing diſcompoſes him ſo much as a Diſappointment. Thus accompliſh'd, and finiſh'd for a Gentleman, he enters the Civil Liſts, and holds the Scale of Juſtice with as much Blindneſs, as ſhe is ſaid to do. From henceforward his Worſhip becomes as formidable to the Ale-Houſes, as he was before familiar; he ſizes an Ale-Pot, and takes the Dimenſions of Bread with great Dexterity and Sagacity. He is the Terror of all the Deer and Poultry-Stealers in the Neighbourhood, and is ſo implacable a Perſcutor of Pochers, that he

he keeps a Regiſter of all the Dogs and Guns in the Hundred, and is the Scare-Beggar of the Pariſh. Short Pots, and unjuſtifiable Dogs and Nets, furniſh him with ſufficient Matter of Preſentments, to carry him once a Quarter to the Seſſions; where he ſays little, eats and drinks much; and after Dinner, hunts over the laſt Chace, and ſo rides Worſhipfully drunk home again. At home, he exerciſes his Authority in granting his Letters-Patents to Petitioners for erecting Shovel-Board Tables, and Gingerbread-Stalls. If he happens to live near any little Borough, or Corporation, that ſends Burgeſſes to Parliament, he may become Ambitious and ſue for the Honour of being made their Repreſentative. Henceforward he grows popular, bows to, and treats the Mob all round him; and whether there be any in his Diſcourſe or not, there is good Senſe in his Kitchen and his Cellar, which is more agreeable and edifying. If he be ſo happy as to out-tap his Competitor, and drink his Neighbours into an Opinion of his Sobriety, he is choſen, and up he comes to that Honourable Aſſembly, where he ſhews his Wiſdom beſt

beſt by his Silence, and ſerves his Country moſt in his Abſence.

I GIVE you theſe two Characters, *Madam*, as irreconcileable as Water and Oil, to ſhew that Men may, and do often baffle and fruſtate the Effects of a liberal Education, as well by Induſtry as Negligence. 'Tis hard to ſay which of theſe two is the more ſottiſh; the firſt is ſuch an Admirer of Letters, that he thinks it a Diſparagement to his Learning to talk what other Men underſtand, and will ſcarce believe that two and two make four, under a Demonſtration from *Euclid*, or a Quotation of *Ariſtotle*: The latter has ſuch a Fear of Pedantry always before his Eyes, that he thinks it a Scandal to his good Breeding and Gentility, to talk Senſe, or write true *Engliſh*; and has ſuch a contemptible Notion of his paſt Education, that he thinks the *Roman* Poets good for nothing but to teach Boys to cap Verſes. For my part, I think the Learned and Unlearned Blockhead pretty equal; for 'tis all one to me, whether a Man talk Nonſenſe, or unintelligible Senſe; I am diverted and edified alike by either; the

the one enjoys himſelf leſs, but ſuffers his Friends to do it more; the other enjoys himſelf and his own Humour enough, but will let no body elſe do it in his Company. Thus, *Madam*, I have ſet them before you, and ſhall leave you to determine a Point, which I cannot.

The Education of the Female Sex not ſo deficient as commonly thought.

THERE are others that deſerve to be brought into the Company of theſe upon like Honourable Reaſons; but I keep them in Reſerve for a proper Place, where I may perhaps take the Pains to draw their Pictures to the Life at full Length. Let us now return to our Argument, from which we have had a long Breathing-while. Let us look into the Manner of our Education, and ſee wherein it falls ſhort of the Mens, and how the Defects of it may be, and are generally ſupply'd. In our tender Years they are the ſame; for after Children can talk, they are promiſcuouſly taught to read and write by the ſame Perſons, and at the ſame time both Boys and Girls. When theſe are acquir'd, which is generally about the Age of ſix or ſeven Years, they begin to be ſeparated, and the Boys are

ſent

ſent to the *Grammar-School*, and the Girls to *Boarding-Schools*, or other Places, to learn Needle-Work, Dancing, Singing, Muſick, Drawing, Painting, and other Accompliſhments, according to the Humour and Ability of the Parents, or Inclination of the Children. Of all theſe, Reading and Writing are the main Inſtruments of Converſation; though Muſick and Painting may be allow'd to contribute ſomething towards it, as they give us an Inſight into two Arts, that make up a great Part of the Pleaſures and Diverſions of Mankind. Here then lies the main Defect, that we are taught only our Mother-Tongue, or perhaps *French*, which is now very faſhionable, and almoſt as familiar amongſt Women of Quality, as Men; whereas the other Sex, by means of a more extenſive Education to the Knowledge of the *Roman* and *Greek* Languages, have a vaſter Field for their Imaginations to rove in, and their Capacities thereby enlarg'd. To ſee whether this be ſtrictly true or not, I mean in what relates to our Debate, I will for once ſuppoſe, that we are inſtructed only in our own Tongue, and

then enquire whether the Diſadvantage be ſo great as it is commonly imagin'd. You know very well, *Madam*, that, for Converſation, it is not requiſite we ſhould be Philologers, Rhetoricians, Philoſophers, Hiſtorians, or Poets; but only that we ſhould think pertinently, and expreſs our Thoughts properly, on ſuch Matters as are the proper Subjects for a mixt Converſation. The *Italians*, a People as delicate in their Converſation as any in the World, have a Maxim, That ourſelves, our Neighbours, Religion, or Buſineſs, ought never to be the Subject. There are very ſubſtantial Reaſons to be given for theſe Reſtrictions; for Men are very apt to be vain and impertinent when they talk of themſelves; beſides that others are very jealous, and apt to ſuſpect, that all the good things ſaid, are intended as ſo many Arguments of Preference to them. When they ſpeak of their Neighbours, they are apt, out of a Principle of Emulation and Envy, natural to all the Race of *Adam*, to leſſen and tarniſh their Fame, whether by open Scandal, and Defamatory Stories and Tales, or by malicious

Religion, &c. no proper Subject for mixt Converſation.

cious Inſinuations, invidious Circumſtances, ſiniſter and covert Reflexions. This Humour ſprings from an Overfondneſs of ourſelves, and a miſtaken Conceit that another's Loſs is an Addition to our own Reputation; as if like two Buckets, one muſt neceſſarily riſe as the other goes down. This is the baſeſt and moſt ungenerous of all our natural Failures, and ought to be corrected as much as poſſible every where; but more eſpecially in *Italy*, where Reſentments are carry'd ſo high, and Revenges proſecuted with ſo much Heat and Animoſity. Religion is likewiſe very tender there, as in all other Places, where the Prieſts have ſo much Power and Authority. But even here, where our Differences and Diſputes have made it more tame, and us'd it to rough handling, it ought carefully to be avoided; for nothing raiſes unfriendly Warmths among Company, more than a religious Argument, which therefore ought to be baniſh'd all Society, intended only for *Converſation* and *Diverſion*. Buſineſs is too dry and barren to give any Spirit to *Converſation*, or *Pleaſure* to a *Company*, and is therefore rather to be

reckon'd among the Incumbrances than Comforts of Life, however neceſſary. Beſides theſe, Points of Learning, abſtruſe Speculations, and nice Politicks, ought, in my Opinion, to be excluded; becauſe, being things that require much Reading and Conſideration, they are not fit to be canvaſs'd *extempore* in mixt Company, of which 'tis probable the greateſt Part will have little to ſay to 'em, and will ſcarce be content to be ſilent Hearers only; beſides that they are not in their Nature gay enough to awaken the good Humour, or raiſe the Mirth of the Company. Nor need any one to fear, that by theſe Limitations, Converſation ſhou'd be reſtrain'd to too narrow a Compaſs; there are Subjects enough that are in themſelves neither inſipid, nor offenſive: Such as Love, Honour, Gallantry, Morality, News, Raillery, and a numberleſs Train of other things copious and diverting. Now I can't ſee the Neceſſity of any other Tongue beſide our own, to enable us to talk plauſibly or judiciouſly upon any of theſe Topicks. Nay, I am very confident, that 'tis poſſible for an ingenious Perſon to make a very

very conſiderable Progreſs in moſt Parts of Learning, by the help of *Engliſh* only. For the only Reaſon I can conceive of learning Languages, is to arrive at the Senſe, Wit, or Arts, that have been communicated to the World in 'em. Now, of thoſe that have taken the Pains to make themſelves Maſters of thoſe Treaſures, many have been ſo generous as to impart a Share of 'em to the Publick, by Tranſlations for the Uſe of the Unlearned; and I flatter myſelf ſometimes, that ſeveral of theſe were more particularly undertaken by ingenious good-natur'd Men, in Kindneſs and Compaſſion to our Sex. But whatever the Motives were, the obliging Humour has ſo far prevail'd, that ſcarce any thing, either Ancient or Modern, that might be of general Uſe either for Pleaſure or Inſtruction, is left untouch'd, and moſt of them are made entirely free of our Tongue. I am no Judge either of the Accuracy or Elegance of ſuch Performances; but, if I may credit the Report of learned and ingenious Gentlemen, (whoſe Judgment or Sincerity I have no reaſon to queſtion) many of thoſe excellent

Great Improvements to be made by the help of Engliſh *Books only.*

Authors have loſt nothing by the change of Soil. I can ſee and admire the Wit and Fancy of *Ovid* in the Tranſlation of his Epiſtles and Elegies, the Softneſs and Paſſion of *Tibullus*, the Impetuoſity and Fire of *Juvenal*, the Gaiety, Spirit, and Judgment of *Horace*; who, tho' he may appear very different from himſelf through the Diverſity and Inequality of the Hands concern'd in making him ſpeak *Engliſh*, yet may eaſily be gueſs'd at from the ſeveral excellent Pieces render'd by the Earl of *Roſcommon*, Mr. *Cowley*, Mr. *Dryden*, Mr. *Congreve*, Mr. *Brown*, and other ingenious Gentlemen, who have oblig'd the Nation with their excellent Verſions of ſome Parts of him. Nor is it poſſible to be inſenſible of the Sweetneſs and Majeſty of *Virgil*, after having read thoſe little, but Divine Samples, already made publick in *Engliſh* by Mr. *Dryden*, which give us ſo much Impatience to ſee the whole Work entire by that admirable Hand. I have heard ſome ingenious Gentlemen ſay, That it was impoſſible to do Juſtice in our Tongue to theſe two laſt celebrated *Roman* Poets; and I have known others,

others, of whoſe Judgments I have as high an Opinion, affirm the contrary: Ignorance of *Latin* diſables me from determining whether we are in the right; but the Beauty of what I have already ſeen by the Means of thoſe Gentlemen, has ſo far prejudic'd me in Favour of the latter, that, might I have 'em entire from the ſame Hands, I think I ſhou'd ſcarce envy thoſe who can taſte the Pleaſure of the Originals. Nor is it to the Poets only that we ſtand indebted for the Treaſures of Antiquity; We have no leſs Engagements to thoſe who have ſucceſsfully labour'd in Proſe, and have made us familiar with *Plutarch*, *Seneca*, *Cicero*, and, in general, with all the famous Philoſophers, Orators and Hiſtorians; from whom we may at once learn both the Opinions and Practices of their Times. Aſſiſted by theſe Helps, 'tis impoſſible for any Woman to be ignorant that is but deſirous to be otherwiſe, though ſhe know no Part of Speech out of her Mother-Tongue. But theſe are neither the only nor the greateſt Advantages we have; all that is excellent in *France*, *Italy*, or any of our neigh-

bouring Nations, is now become our own; to one of whom, I may be bold to say, we are beholden for more, and greater Improvements of Conversation, than to all Antiquity and the learned Languages together. Nor can I imagine for what good Reason a Man skill'd in *Latin* and *Greek*, and vers'd in the Authors of ancient Times, shall be call'd Learned; yet another, who perfectly understands *Italian*, *French*, *Spanish*, *High-Dutch*, and the rest of the *European* Languages, is acquainted with the Modern History of all those Countries, knows their Policies, has div'd into all the Intrigues of the several Courts, and can tell their mutual Dispositions, Obligations, and Ties of Interest one to another, shall after all this be thought Unlearned, for want of these two Languages. Nay, though he be never so well vers'd in the modern Philosophy, Astronomy, Geometry and Algebra, he shall, notwithstanding, never be allow'd that honourable Title. I can see but one apparent Reason for this unfair Procedure; which is, that when about an Age and an half ago, all the poor Remains of Learning then in

The Name of Learning unjustly restrained to the Knowledge of Latin *and* Greek *only.*

in being were in the Hands of the School-men, they would ſuffer none to paſs Muſter, that were not deeply engag'd in thoſe intricate, vexatious, and unintelligible Trifles, for which themſelves contended with ſo much Noiſe and Heat; or at leaſt were not acquainted with *Plato* and *Ariſtotle*, and their Commentators; from whence the Sophiſtry and Subtleties of the Schools at that time were drawn. This Uſurpation was maintain'd by their Succeſſors the Divines, who to this day pretend almoſt to the Monopoly of Learning; and though ſome generous Spirits have in good meaſure broke the Neck of this Arbitrary, Tyrannical Authority; yet can't they prevail to extend the Name of Learning beyond the Studies in which the Divines are more particularly converſant. Thus you ſhall have 'em allow a Man to be a wiſe Man, a good Naturaliſt, a good Mathematician, Politician, or Poet, but not a Scholar; a learned Man, that is no Philologer. For my part, I think theſe Gentlemen have juſt inverted the Uſe of the Term, and given that to the Knowledge of Words, which belongs more properly

perly to Things. I take Nature to be the great Book of univerſal Learning, which he that reads beſt in all, or any of its Parts, is the greateſt Scholar, the moſt learned Man; and 'tis as ridiculous for a Man to count himſelf more learned than another, if he have no greater Extent of Knowledge of things, becauſe he is more vers'd in Languages, as it would be for an old Fellow to tell a young one, his own Eyes were better than the other's, becauſe he reads with Spectacles, the other without.

Engliſh Books the beſt Helps to Converſation.

THUS, *Madam*, you ſee we may come in time to put in for Learning, if we have a mind, without falling under the Correction of Pedants. But I will let Learning alone at preſent, becauſe I have already baniſh'd it (though not out of Diſreſpect) from mix'd Converſation; to which we will return, and of which the greateſt Magazines and Supports are ſtill in Reſerve: I mean the many excellent Authors of our own Country, whoſe Works it were endleſs to recount. Where is Love, Honour and Bravery, more lively repreſented, than in our Tragedies? Who has given

given us nobler or juſter Pictures of Nature, than Mr. *Shakeſpear?* Where is there a tenderer Paſſion, than in the Maid's Tragedy? Whoſe Grief is more awful and commanding, than Mr. *Otway*'s? Whoſe Deſcriptions more beautiful, or Thoughts more gallant, than Mr. *Dryden*'s? When I ſee any of their Plays acted, my Paſſions move by their Direction; my Indignation, my Compaſſion, my Grief, are all at their Beck. Nor is our Comedy at all inferior to our Tragedy; for, not to mention thoſe already nam'd for the other Part of the Stage, who are all excellent in this too, Sir *George Etherege* and Sir *Charles Sedley*, for neat Raillery and Gallantry, are without Rivals; Mr. *Wycherley* for ſtrong Wit, pointed Satyr, ſound and uſeful Obſervations, is beyond Imitation; Mr. *Congreve*, for ſprightly, genteel, eaſy Wit, falls ſhort of no Man. Theſe are the Maſters of the Stage; but there are others, who, though of an inferior Claſs, yet deſerve Commendation, were that at preſent my Buſineſs. Nay, even the Worſt of 'em afford us ſome Diverſion; for I find a ſort of fooliſh Pleaſure, and can laugh at Mr. *D*——*y*'s Farce, as I do at the

Tricks

Tricks and Impertinencies of a Monkey; and was pleaſed to ſee the Humour and Delight of the Author in Mr. *H——n*'s Eating and Drinking-Play, which I fancy'd was written in a Victualing-Houſe. In ſhort, were it not for the too great Frequency of looſe Expreſſions, and wanton Images, I ſhould take our Theatres for the beſt Schools in the World of Wit, Humanity, and Manners; which they might eaſily become, by retrenching that too great Liberty. Neither have the Poets only, but the Criticks too, endeavour'd to complete us; Mr. *Dennis* and Mr. *Rymer* have, by their ingenious and judicious Labours, taught us to admire the Beauties as we ought, and to know the Faults of the former. Nor are we leſs beholden to theſe for forming our Judgments, than to thoſe for raiſing our Fancies.

THESE are the Sources from whence we draw our gayer Part of Converſation; I don't mean in Excluſion to the other Parts of Poetry, in moſt of which (as I have heard good Judges ſay) we equal at leaſt the Ancients, and far ſurpaſs all the Moderns.

I ho-

honour the Names, and admire the Writings of *Denham*, *Suckling*, and *d'Avenant*; I am raviſh'd with the Fancy of *Cowley*, and the Gallantry of *Waller*; I reverence the *Fairy Queen*; am rais'd and elevated with *Paradiſe Loſt*; *Prince Arthur* compoſes and reduces me to a State of yawning Indifference; and Mr. *W--ſtl--y*'s *Heroicks* lull me to Sleep. Thus all Ranks and Degrees of Poets have their Uſe, and may be ſerviceable to ſome body or other, from the Prince to the Paſtry-Cook, or Paſt-board Box-maker. I ſhould mention our Satyriſts, but it would be endleſs to deſcend to every Particular: Of theſe Mr. *Oldham* is admirable; and to go no farther, the inimitable Mr. *Butler* will be an everlaſting Teſtimony of the Wit of his Age and Nation, and bid eternal Defiance to the Wits of all Countries, and future Ages, to follow him in a Path before untrack'd. Our Proſe Writers, that are eminent for a gay Style and Jovial Argument, are ſo many, that it would ſwell this Letter too much to name 'em; ſo that I ſhall only take notice, that whoever can read without Pleaſure or Laughter, *the Contempt of the Clergy*, and the following

Let-

Letters and Dialogues by the ſame Author, or the facetious Dialogues of Mr. *Brown*, muſt be more ſplenetick than *Heraclitus*, or more ſtupid than the Aſs he laugh'd at.

NOR are we leſs provided for the ſerious Part; Morality has generally been the Province of our Clergy, who have treated of all Parts of it very largely with ſo much Piety, Solidity, and Eloquence, that, as I think, I may venture to ſay, they have written more upon it, than the Clergy of all the reſt of the World; ſo I believe no body will deny that they have written better. Yet I cou'd wiſh, that our ingenious Gentlemen wou'd employ their Pens oftner on theſe Subjects; becauſe the Severity of the other's Profeſſion obliges 'em to write with an Air, and in a Style leſs agreeable and inviting to young People. Not that we are without many excellent Pieces of Morality, Humanity and Civil Prudence, written by, and like, Gentlemen. But it is the Excellence of 'em, and the Ability of our Gentlemen, which appears in the Spirit, Wit, and curious Obſervations in thoſe Pieces, which makes me

deſire

deſire more of the ſame Nature. Who can read the Eſſays of that wonderful Man, my Lord *Bacon*, or the no leſs to be admir'd Sir *Walter Raleigh*'s, or Mr. *Osborn*'s *Advice to a Son*, the *Advice to a Daughter*; Sir *William Temple*'s or Sir *George Mackenzie*'s Eſſays, Sis *Roger l'Eſtrange*'s Eſſay, (to which laſt we are likewiſe oblig'd for an incomparable Verſion of *Seneca*) and abundance of others, without wiſhing for more from the ſame, or the like Hands? Our Neighbours the *French* have written a great deal of this kind, of the beſt of which we have the Benefit in *Engliſh*; but more particularly Meſſieurs *Montagne*, *Rochefaucaut*, and S. *Evremont*, deſerve to be immortal in all Languages. I need not mention any more, it is apparent from theſe, that Women want not the Means of being wiſe and prudent without more Tongues than one; nay, and learned too, if they have any Ambition to be ſo.

THE numberleſs Treatiſes of Antiquities, Philoſophy, Mathematicks, Natural and other Hiſtory, (in which I can't paſs ſilently by that learned one of

of Sir *Walter Raleigh*, (which the World he writ of can't match) written originally in, or tranſlated to, our Tongue, are ſufficient to lead us a great way into any Science our Curioſity ſhall prompt us to. The greateſt Difficulty we ſtruggled with, was the Want of a good Art of Reaſoning, which we had not, that I know of, till that Defect was ſupply'd by the greateſt Maſter of that Art, Mr. *Locke*, whoſe *Eſſay on Human Underſtanding* makes large Amends for the Want of all others in that kind.

THUS, *Madam*, I have endeavour'd to obviate all our Adverſaries Objections, by touching upon as great a Variety of things relating to the Subject, as I conveniently cou'd. Yet, I hope, I have troubled you with nothing but what was neceſſary, to make my Way clear and plain before me; and I am apt to think I have made it appear, that nothing but Diſencouragement, or an idle uncurious Humour, can hinder us from rivalling moſt Men in the Knowledge of great Variety of things, without the Help of more Tongues than our own; which the Men ſo often

ten reproachfully tell us is enough. This Idleneſs is but too frequently to be found among us; but 'tis a Fault equally common to both Sexes. Thoſe that have Means to play the Fool all their Lives, ſeldom care for the Trouble of being made wiſe. We are naturally Lovers of our Eaſe, and have great Apprehenſions of the Difficulty of things untry'd, eſpecially in Matters of Learning, the common Methods of acquiring which are ſo unpleaſant and uneaſy. I doubt not but abundance of noble Wits are ſtifled in both Sexes, for want but of ſuſpecting what they were able to do, and with how much Facility. Experience ſhews us, every day, Blockheads that arrive at a moderate, nay ſometimes a great Reputation, by their Confidence and briſk Attempts, which they maintain by their Diligence; while great Numbers of Men, naturally more ingenious, lie neglected by, for want of Induſtry to improve, or Courage to exert themſelves. No Man certainly but wiſhes he had the Reputation in, and were reſpected and eſteem'd by, the World, as he ſees ſome Men are for the Fruits of their Pens; but they are loth to be

at the Pains of an Attempt, or doubt their Sufficience to perform; or, what I believe is moſt general, never enquire ſo far into themſelves, and their own Abilities, as to bring ſuch a Thought into their Heads. This laſt, I fancy, is the true Reaſon why our Sex, who are commonly charged with talking too much, are guilty of writing ſo little. I wiſh they would ſhake off this lazy Deſpondence, and let the noble Examples of the deſervedly celebrated Mrs. *Philips*, and the incomparable Mrs. *Behn*, rouze their Courages, and ſhew Mankind the great Injuſtice of their Contempt. I am confident they would find no ſuch Need of the Aſſiſtance of Languages as is generally imagin'd. Thoſe that have of their own, need not graft upon foreign Stocks. I have often thought, that the not teaching Women *Latin* and *Greek*, was an Advantage to them, if it were rightly conſider'd, and might be improv'd to a great Height. For Girls, after they can read and write, (if they be of any Faſhion) are taught ſuch things as take not up their whole Time; and not being ſuffer'd to run about at liberty as Boys, are furniſh'd, among other

Ignorance of Latin, &c. *no Diſadvantage.*

other Toys, with Books, ſuch as *Romances*, *Novels*, *Plays* and *Poems*; which though they read careleſly only for Diverſion, yet, unawares to them, give 'em very early a conſiderable Command both of Words and Senſe; which are farther improv'd by their making and receiving Viſits with their Mothers, which gives them betimes the Opportunity of imitating, converſing with, and knowing the Manner and Addreſs of elder Perſons. Theſe I take to be the true Reaſons why a Girl of fifteen is reckon'd as ripe as a Boy of one and twenty, and not any natural Forwardneſs of Maturity, as ſome People would have it. Theſe Advantages the Education of Boys deprives them of, who drudge away the Vigour of their Memories at Words, uſeleſs ever after to moſt of them, and at ſeventeen or eighteen are to begin their Alphabet of Senſe, and are but where the Girls were at nine or ten: Yet becauſe they have learnt *Latin* and *Greek*, reject with Scorn all *Engliſh* Books, their beſt Helps, and lay aſide their *Latin* ones, as if they were already Maſters of all that Learning, and ſo hoiſt Sail for the wide World, without

a Compaſs to ſteer by. Thus I have fairly ſtated the Difference between us, and can find no ſuch Diſparity in Nature or Education, as they contend for: But we have a ſort of ungenerous Adverſaries, that deal more in Scandal than Argument, and when they can't hurt us with their Weapons, endeavour to annoy us with Stink-Pots. Let us ſee therefore, *Madam*, whether we can't beat them from their Ammunition, and turn their own Artillery upon them; for I firmly believe there is nothing which they charge upon us, but may with more Juſtice be retorted upon themſelves.

THEY tax us with a long Liſt of Faults and Imperfections, and ſeem to have taken a Catalogue of their own Follies and Vices, not with deſign to correct them, but to ſhift off the Imputation to us. There is no doubt, but particular Women may be found, upon whom every Charge may be juſtified; but our Sex is not anſwerable for them, till they prove there are no ſuch Men, which will not be before Dooms-Day. However, like ill Neighbours, they bring the Dirt out of their own

own Homes, not out of Neatneſs, but out of Envy, to their Neighbours, at whoſe Doors they lay it. But let them remove their Follies as oft as they pleaſe, they are ſtill as conſtant to them, as the *Needle* to the *North Pole*; they point them out which way ſoever they move. Let us ſee what theſe Qualities are they ſo liberally beſtow upon us, and after ſee how they fit the Donors, and ſurvey 'em in their proper Figures and Colours. The moſt familiar of theſe are Vanity, Impertinence, Enviouſneſs, Diſſimulation, Inconſtancy, *&c.*

To begin with Vanity; it is a Failing the greateſt Part of Mankind are tinctured with, more or leſs. For all Men are apt to flatter themſelves with a Fancy, that they have ſome one or more good Qualities, or extraordinary Gifts, that raiſe 'em above the ordinary Level of Men; and therefore hug and cheriſh what they think valuable and ſingular in 'em. It is never commendable, ſometimes pardonable, when the Excellencies are real, and it is moderate; ſo much muſt be allow'd to Humane Frailty. It is ri- *Vanity.*

diculous and intolerable, when it is extravagant, misplac'd, or groundless. It is very injudicious, and makes Men commonly dote on their Defects, and expose their Blemishes by their Fondness, which makes 'em more remarkable by the Care and Ornament bestow'd on 'em. It persuades hard favour'd and distorted Fellows to dress, and value their Persons; Cowards to pretend to Courage, and provoke Beatings; Blockheads to set up for Wit, and make themselves ridiculous in Print; Upstarts to brag of their Families, and be reminded of the Garrets they were born, and the Stalls they were brought up in. In Women, the Object of it is their Beauty, and is excusable in those that have it. Those that have it not, may be pardon'd, if they endeavour at it; because it is the only undisputed Advantage our Sex has over the other, and what makes 'em respected beyond all other Perfections, and is alone ador'd. In Men, it has not only this Object, but all those before-mention'd, and a hundred other. It is admirably seen in a writing, reciting Fop Author, and is in full Lustre in a Beau, but its most unlucky

Prof-

Proſpect is in a ſwaggering Coward, who is a Fool beyond the Conviction of Smart. His Courage is like an Ague Fitt, that leaves him upon a Frightt, and returns when he is out of the Reach of a Cudgel. He ſpends much time in the Fencing-School, and fights briskly where there is no Danger of Wounds nor Smart. His Hands are inſtructed, but his Heels do him all the Service. He is a nice Obſerver of Punctilio's, and takes more Affronts than are given him. He draws firſt, and runs firſt; and if ever he makes another Man run, it is after him. He is a Pebble, that ſparkles like a Diamond, but wants Hardneſs. He talks perpetually of what he will do, but thinks continually of what he ſhall ſuffer. He is often in Quarrels, yet ſeldom in Rencounters, and is glad of a Challenge, that he may know whom and when to avoid. He brings up the Rear at an Engagement, and leads the Van in the Retreat. He is a Man of much Paſſion, but the moſt predominant is his Fear. He offers Affronts readily, but has too much Honour to juſtify them, and will ſubmit to any Terms of Satisfaction, rather than occaſion

Character of a Bully.

caſion Bloodſhed; and his *Sword* and *Perſon* are always at leiſure, and at your Service, till you want them; and then, to his great Trouble, he is always indiſpenſably engag'd otherwiſe. He wears *Red*, and a long *Sword*, openly to ſhew his Valour; and *Mail*, privately to ſhew his Diſcretion. He threatens terribly; but he is like a Witch, if you draw Blood of him, he has no Power to hurt you. No Man ſhews or boaſts more of his Scars, with leſs Reaſon. He ſcorns to take a Blow in the Face, and a Back-Piece is as good to him as a whole Suit of Armour. He is at firſt the Terror of all the *young Bullies*, at laſt their May-Game, and they blood their *Cub Hectors* upon him, as they do young *Beagles* on a *Hare*. Good Uſage makes him inſolent; but he fawns, like a *Spaniel*, moſt upon thoſe that beat him. When he is diſcover'd by all the reſt of the World, the Cheat paſſes ſtill upon himſelf, and he is pleas'd with the terrible Figure he makes in his Glaſs, tho' he is ready to ſhake at his own Shadow.

THERE are Men of an Humour directly oppoſite to this, yet every whit as mad, fooliſh, and vain; theſe are your Men of nice Honour, that love fighting for the ſake of Blows, and are never well but when they are wounded; they are ſevere Interpreters of Looks, are affronted at every Face that don't pleaſe 'em, and, like true Cocks of the Game, have a Quarrel to all Mankind at firſt ſight. They are paſſionate Admirers of ſcarr'd Faces, and dote on a Wooden Leg: They receive a Challenge like a *Billet-Doux*, and a home Thruſt as a Favour. Their common Adverſary is the Conſtable, and their uſual Lodging the Compter. Broken Heads are a Diverſion, and an Arm in a Scarf is a high Satisfaction. They are frugal in their Expences with the Taylor, for they have their Doublets pinkt on their Backs; but they are as good as an Annuity to the Surgeon, tho' they need him not to let 'em Blood. *Flanders* is their Miſtreſs, and a Clap from her carries 'em off the Stage. If they return, an *Hoſpital* is their Retreat, or the *Sheriff* their Executor. Theſe two, *Madam*, are very different Extravagances, and very ſtrange

Character of a Scowrer.

ſtrange ones; yet they are real, and ſuch as appear every day: But, what is moſt to be wonder'd at, ariſe both from the ſame Principle, and the ſame miſtaken Notion, and are only differenc'd by the Diverſity of Tempers in Men. The common Motive to both is Vanity, and they jointly concurr in this Opinion, that Valour is the moſt eſtimable and moſt honourable Quality that Man is capable of; they agree in a Deſire to be honour'd and fear'd, but they differ in their Methods in purſuing this common End. The one is naturally active, bold and daring; and therefore takes the true Courſe to arrive at it by ſhewing what we can do, by what he dare ſuffer; and his immoderate Deſire and Indiſcretion ſuffer him to know no Bounds. The other is mean-ſpirited and fearful, and ſeeks, by falſe Fire, to counterfeit a Heat that may paſs for genuine, to conceal the Froſt in his Blood, and, like an ill Actor, over-does his Part for want of underſtanding it; which 'tis impoſſible he ſhould. Among peaceable Men, and thoſe of his own Temper, he comes off with Colours flying, and thoſe are the Men he would be valiant amongſt

amongſt only, cou'd he read Mens Hearts: But the firſt Rencounter betrays the Aſs through the Lion's Skin, and he is cudgel'd like an Aſs in ſpite of his Covering. It is our Happineſs, *Madam*, that we lie under no manner of Temptation from theſe two Vanities, whereof one is ſo dangerous, the other ſo ridiculous. For all Humours that are forc'd againſt the natural Bent of our Tempers, muſt be ſo. Nature is our beſt Guide, and has fitted every Man for ſome things more particularly than others; which if they had the Senſe to proſecute, they wou'd at leaſt not be ridiculous, if they were not extraordinary. But ſo prevalent are our Vanity, and this apiſh Humour of Imitation, that we perſuade ourſelves that we may practiſe with Applauſe, whatever we ſee another ſucceed in; tho' as contrary to the Intent of our Nature, as Dancing to an Elephant. So ſome Men that talk well of ſerious Matters, are ſo mov'd at the Applauſe ſome merry Drolls gain, that they forget their Gravity, and aiming to be Wits, turn Buffoons. There are others, that are ſo taken with the Actions and Grimace of a good Mimick, that they fall preſently

Imitation ridiculous.

to

to making awkward Faces and wry Mouths, and are all their Lives after in a Vizor'd Mask, tho' bare-fac'd.

THESE, and innumerable others of the like Nature, are the leſſer Follies of Mankind, by which their Vanity makes 'em fit only to be laugh'd at. There are others, who, by more ſtudied and refin'd Follies, arrive to be more conſiderable, and make a great Figure and Party among their Sex.

Character of a Beau.

OF the firſt Rank of theſe is the *Beau*, who is one that has more Learning in his Heels than his Head, which is better cover'd than fill'd. His Taylor and his Barber are his Cabinet Counſel, to whom he is more beholden for what he is, than to his Maker. He is one that has travell'd to ſee Faſhions, and brought over with him the neweſt cut Suit, and the prettieſt fancy'd Ribbons for Sword-Knots. His beſt Acquaintance at *Paris* was his Dancing-Maſter, whom he calls the *Marquis*, and his chief Viſits to the Opera's. He has ſeen the *French* King once, and knows the Name of his Chief Miniſter, and is by this

this ſufficiently convinc'd, that there are no Politicians in any other Part of the World. His Improvements are a nice Skill in the Mode, and a high Contempt of his own Country, and of Senſe. All the Knowledge he has of the Country, or Manners of it, is in the keeping of the Valet that follow'd him hither; and all that he retains of the Language, is a few modiſh Words to lard his Diſcourſe with, and ſhew his Breeding, and the Names of his Garniture. He ſhould be a Philoſopher, for he ſtudies nothing but himſelf; yet every one knows him better, that thinks him not worth knowing. His Looks and Geſtures are his conſtant Leſſon, and his Glaſs is the Oracle that reſolves all his mighty Doubts and Scruples. He examines and refreſhes his Complexion by it, and is more dejected at a Pimple, than if it were a Cancer. When his Eyes are ſet to a languiſhing Air, his Motions all prepar'd according to Art, his Wig and his Coat abundantly powder'd, his Gloves eſſenc'd, and his Handkerchief perfum'd, and all the reſt of his Bravery rightly adjuſted, the greateſt Part of the Day, as well as the Buſineſs

Commonly miſtaken.

of

of it at home, is over; 'tis time to launch, and down he comes, ſcented like a Perfumer's Shop, and looks like a Veſſel with all her Rigging under Sail, without Ballaſt. A Chair is brought within the Door, for he apprehends every Breath of Air as much as if it were a Hurricane. His firſt Viſit is to the Chocolate-Houſe, and after a Quarter of an Hour's Compliment to himſelf in the great Glaſs, he faces about and ſalutes the Company, and puts in Practice his Morning's Meditations. When he has made his Cringes round, and play'd over all his Tricks, out comes the fine *Snuff-Box*, and his *Noſe* is regal'd a while: After this he begins to open, and ſtarts ſome learned Argument about the neweſt Faſhion, and hence takes Occaſion to commend the next Man's Fancy in his Cloaths. This uſhers in a Diſcourſe of the Appearance laſt *Birth-Night*, or *Ball* at Court, and ſo a Critick upon this *Lord*, or that *Lady*'s Maſquing-Habit. From hence he adjourns to the *Play-Houſe*, where he is to be met again in the Side-Box, from whence he makes his Court to all the Ladies in general with his Eyes, and

is

is particular only with the *Orange-Wench*. After a while, he engages ſome Neighbouring Vizor, and, together, they run over all the Boxes, and take to pieces every Face, examine every Feature, paſs their Cenſure upon every one, and ſo on to their Dreſs. Here he very judiciouſly gives his Opinion upon every Particular, and determines whoſe Colours are well choſen, whoſe Fancy is neateſt, and whoſe Cloaths ſit with moſt Air; but, in Concluſion, ſees no body complete but himſelf in the whole Houſe. After this, he looks down with Contempt upon the Pit, and rallies all the ſlovenly Fellows, and awkward Beaus (as he calls them) of t'other end of the Town, is mightily offended at their ill-ſcented *Snuff*, and, in ſpight of all his *Pulvilio* and *Eſſences*, is over-come with the Stink of their *Cordovant Gloves*. To cloſe all, Madam in the Mask muſt give him an Account of the Scandal of the Town, which ſhe does in the Hiſtory of abundance of Intrigues, real or feign'd; at all which he laughs aloud and often, not to ſhew his Satisfaction, but his Teeth. She ſhews him who is kept

by

by ſuch a Lord; who was lately diſcarded by ſuch a Knight, for granting Favours too indiſcreetly to ſuch a Gentleman; who has lately been in the Country for two or three Months upon extraordinary Occaſions. To all which he gives great Attention, that he may paſs for a Man of Intelligence in another Place. His next Stage is *Locket*'s, where his Vanity, not his Stomach, is to be gratified with ſomething that is *little* and *dear*; *Quails* and *Ortalans* are the meaneſt of his Diet, and a Spoonful of *Green Peaſe* at *Chriſtmas* are worth to him more than the Inheritance of the *Field* where they grow in *Summer*. Every thing falls in his Eſteem, as it falls in Price; and he wou'd not ſo much as taſte the *Wine*, if the hard Name, and the high Rate, did not give it a Reliſh. After a Glaſs or two, (for a Pint is his Stint) he begins to talk of his Intrigues, boaſts much of the Favours he has receiv'd, ſhews counterfeit Tokens, and, in Concluſion, ſlanders ſome Lady or other of unqueſtion'd Vertue with a particular Fondneſs for him. His Amours are all profound Secrets, yet he makes a Confidence of 'em to every

Man

Man he meets with. He pretends a great Reverence for the Ladies, and a mighty Tenderneſs of their Reputations; yet he is like a *Fleſh-Fly*, whatever he blows on is tainted. He talks of nothing under Quality, tho' he never obtain'd a Favour which his Man might not have for Half a Crown. He and his Footman, in this Caſe, are like *Engliſh* and *Dutch* at an Ordinary in *Holland*; the Fare is the ſame, but the Price is vaſtly different. Thus the Shew goes forward, till he is beaten for Treſpaſſes he was never guilty of, and ſhall be damn'd for Sins he never committed. At laſt, with his Credit as low as his Fortune, he retires ſullenly to his Cloiſter, the *King*'s-*Bench*, or *Fleet*, and paſſes the reſt of his Days in Privacy and Contemplation. Here, *Madam*, if you pleaſe we'll give him one *Viſit* more, and ſee the laſt *Act* of the *Farce*, and you ſhall find him (whoſe Sobriety was before a *Vice*, as being only the *Pimp* to his other *Pleaſures*, and who fear'd a lighted *Pipe* as much as if it had been a great *Gun* level'd at him) with his *Noſe flaming*, and his *Breath* ſtink-

ing of Spirits worſe than a *Dutch Tarpawlin*'s, and ſmoaking out of a ſhort *Pipe*, that for ſome Months has been kept hot as conſtantly as a *Glaſs-Houſe*; and ſo I leave him to his Meditation.

You wou'd think it yet more ſtrange, that any one ſhould be *ſlovenly* and *naſty* out of *Vanity*; yet ſuch there are, I can aſſure you, *Madam*, and cou'd eaſily give a Deſcription of 'em; but that ſo foul a Relation muſt needs be nauſeous to a Perſon ſo neat as yourſelf, and wou'd be treating You as the *Country Squire* did his *Court Friend*, who, when he had ſhew'd him all the Curioſities of his Houſe and Gardens, carried him into his Hogſties. But there are more than enough to juſtify what I have ſaid of the Humour of *Diogenes*, who was as vain and as proud in his *Tub*, as *Plato* cou'd be in the midſt of his fine *Perſian Carpets*, and rich *Furniture*. Vanity is only an Ambition of being taken notice of, which ſhews itſelf variouſly according to the Humour of the Perſons; which was more extravagant in the *Anti-Beau*, than in the

Beau

Beau Philoſopher. Vanity is the verieſt *Proteus* in the World; it can ape *Humility*, and can make Men decry themſelves on purpoſe to be flatter'd; like ſome cunning *Preachers*, that cry up *Mortification* and *Self-denial* perpetually, and are pamper'd all the while by the Zeal, and at the Charges, of their Followers, who are afraid the good Man ſhou'd ſtarve himſelf. It is the Bleſſing of Fools, and the Folly of ingenious Men. For it makes thoſe contentedly hug themſelves under all the Scorn of the World, and the Indignities that are offer'd 'em; and theſe reſtleſs and diſſatisfied with its Applauſe. Both think the World envious, and that their Merit is injur'd, and it is impoſſible to right either of 'em to their Minds; for thoſe have no Title to the Pretence of Merit, and theſe not ſo much as they think they have. Yet it is the Happineſs of the firſt that they can think themſelves capable of moving *Envy*; for though they commonly miſtake the Deriſion of Men, for their Applauſe, yet Men are ſometimes ſo ill-natur'd as to undeceive 'em; and then it is their Com-

Vanity a Bleſſing to Fools.

fort, that theſe are envious Men, and miſrepreſent the World's Opinion of 'em. Cou'd theſe Men be convinc'd of their Miſtake, I ſee nothing that ſhou'd hinder them from being deſperate, and hanging or diſpoſing of themſelves ſome other ſuch way. For though a Man may comfort himſelf under Afflictions, it is either that they are undeſerved; or, if deſerved, that he ſuffers only for Over-ſights, or raſh Acts, by which the wiſeſt Man may be ſometimes overtaken; that he is in the main diſcreet and prudent, and that others believe him ſo. But when a Man falls under his own *Contempt*, and does not only think himſelf not wiſe, but by *Nature* made abſolutely incapable of ever becoming *wiſe*, he is in a deplorable *State*, and wants the common *Comfort*, as well of *Fools* as *wiſe Men*, Vanity; which in ſuch a Caſe is the only proper *Mediator* of a *Reconcilement*. No Quality ſeems to be more providentially diſtributed to every Man according to his Neceſſity; for thoſe that have leaſt Wit, ought to have the greateſt Opinion of it; as all other Commodities are rated higheſt,

where

where they are ſcarceſt. By this Means, the Level is better maintain'd amongſt Men, who, were this imaginary Equality deſtroy'd, might be apt to reverence and idolize one another too much, and (forgetting the common Fate they are all born to) pay Honours too near Divine to their Fellow Mortals. But as the Humour of the World now runs, this ſort of *Idolatry* is ſcarce likely to come into Faſhion. We have too great an Opinion of ourſelves, to believe too well of any one elſe, and we are in nothing more difficult than in Points of Wit and Underſtanding; in either of which we very unwillingly yield the Preference to any Man. There is nothing of which we affect to ſpeak with more Humility and Indifference, than our own Senſe; yet nothing of which we think with more Partiality and Preſumption. There have been ſome ſo bold, as to aſſume the Title of the *Oracles* of *Reaſon* to themſelves and their own Writings; and we meet with others daily, that think themſelves *Oracles* of *Wit*. Theſe are the moſt vexatious Animals in the World, that think they have a Privi-

lege to torment and plague every body, but thoſe moſt who have the beſt Reputation for their Wit or Judgment; as *Fleas* are ſaid to moleſt thoſe moſt who have tendereſt *Skins*, and the ſweeteſt *Blood*.

Character of a Poetaſter.

Of theſe, the moſt voluminous Fool is the Fop-Poet, who is one that has always more Wit in his Pockets than any where elſe, yet ſeldom or never any of his own there. *Eſop*'s *Daw* was a *Type* of him; for he makes himſelf fine with the Plunder of all Parties. He is a Smuggler of Wit, and ſteals *French* Fancies, without paying the cuſtomary Duties. Verſe is his *Manufacture*; for it is more the Labour of his Finger than his Brain. He ſpends much Time in Writing, but ten times more in Reading what he has written. He is loaden conſtantly with more Papers, and duller, than a *Clerk* in *Chancery*, and ſpends more time in *Hearings* and *Rehearings*. He aſks your Opinion; yet for fear you ſhou'd not jump with him, tells you his own firſt. He deſires no Favour, yet is diſappointed if he be not flat-

flatter'd; and is offended always at the Truth. His firſt Education is generally a *Shop* or a *Counting-Houſe*, where his Acquaintance commences with the *Bell-Man* upon a New-year's-day. He puts him upon Intriguing with the *Muſes*, and promiſes to *pimp* for him. From this time forward he hates the Name of *Mechanick*, and reſolves to ſell all his Stock, and purchaſe a Plantation in *Parnaſſus*. He is now a poetical *Haberdaſher* of *Small Wares*, and deals very much in *Novels*, *Madrigals*, *Riddles*, *Funeral* and *Love-Odes* and *Elegies*, and other Toys from *Helicon*, which he has a Shop ſo well furniſh'd with, that he can fit you with all Sorts and Sizes, upon all Occaſions, in the Twinkling of an Eye. He frequents *Apollo*'s *Exchange* in *Covent-Garden*, and picks up the freſheſt Intelligence, what *Plays* are upon the Stocks, or ready to be launch'd; who have lately made a good Voyage, who a ſaving one only, and who have ſuffer'd a Wreck in *Lincoln*'s-*Inn-Fields*, or *Drury-Lane*, and which are brought into the Dock to be careen'd, and fitted for another Voyage. He talks

much of *Jack Dryden*, and *Will. Wycherley*, and the reſt of that Sett, and proteſts he can't help having ſome Reſpect for 'em, becauſe they have ſo much for him and his Writings; otherwiſe he cou'd ſhew 'em to be meer Sots and Blockheads, that underſtand little of Poetry, in compariſon of himſelf; but he forbears 'em meerly out of Gratitude and Compaſſion. Once a Month he fits out a ſmall *Poetical Smack*, at the Charge of his Bookſeller, which he lades with *French Plunder*, new-vampt in *Engliſh*, ſmall Ventures of *Tranſlated Odes*, *Elegies* and *Epigrams* of young Traders, and ballaſts with heavy *Proſe* of his own; for which Returns are to be made to the ſeveral Owners in Teſters, or Applauſe from the' Prentices and Tire-Women that deal for 'em. He is the Oracle of thoſe that want Wit, and the Plague of thoſe that have it; for he haunts their Lodgings, and is more terrible to 'em than their Duns. His Pocket is an unexhauſtible Magazine of *Rhime* and *Nonſenſe*, and his Tongue, like a repeating Clock with Chimes, is ready upon every Touch to ſound to 'em.

Men

Men avoid him for the ſame Reaſon they avoid the *Pillory*, the Security of their *Ears*; of which he is as mercileſs a Proſecutor. He is the Bane of Society, a Friend to the Stationers, the Plague of the Preſs, and the Ruin of his Bookſeller. He is more profitable to the *Grocers* and *Tobacconiſts*, than the *Paper Manufacture*; for his Works, which talk ſo much of Fire and Flame, commonly expire in their Shops in *Vapour* and *Smoak*. If he aſpire to *Comedy*, he intrigues with ſome experienc'd *Damſel* of the *Town*, in order to inſtruct himſelf in the Humour of it, and is cullied by her into *Matrimony*, and ſo is furniſh'd at once with a Plot, and two good Characters, himſelf and his Wife, and is paid with a Portion for a Jointure in *Parnaſſus*, which I leave him to make his beſt of.

Vanity univerſal.

I ſhall not trouble you with any more Inſtances of the fooliſh Vanities of Mankind; becauſe I am afraid I have been too large upon that Head already. Not that I think there is any Order or Degree of Men, which wou'd not afford many and notorious Inſtances

ſtances for our Purpoſe. For, as I think *Vanity* almoſt the univerſal Mover of all our Actions, whether good or bad; ſo I think there are ſcarce any Men ſo ingenious, or ſo vertuous, but ſomething of it will ſhine through the greateſt Part of what they do, let them caſt never ſo thick a Veil over it. What makes Men ſo ſolicitous of leaving a Reputation behind 'em in the World, though they know they can't be affected with it after Death, but this, even to a Degree of Folly? What elſe makes great Men involve themſelves in the Fatigues and Hazards of War, and intricate Intrigues of State, when they have already more than they can enjoy, but an Itch of being talk'd of and remembred, to which they ſacrifice their preſent Happineſs and Repoſe?

BUT I ſhall carry theſe Conſiderations no farther; becauſe I have already ſingled out ſome of thoſe many, whoſe *Vanity* is more extravagant and ridiculous, than any our Sex is chargeable with: Theſe ſlight Touches may ſerve to let 'em ſee that even the greateſt

eſt and wiſeſt are not wholly exempt, if they have it not in a higher Degree, tho' they exerciſe it in things more popular and plauſible. I hope therefore the Burden of this good Quality will not hereafter be laid upon us alone, but the Men will be contented to divide the Load with us, and be thankful that they bear leſs than their Proportion.

Impertinence comes next under Conſideration, in which I ſhall be as brief as I conveniently can, in regard I have been ſo long upon the preceding Head. *Impertinence* is a Humour of buſying ourſelves about things trivial, and of no Moment in themſelves, or unſeaſonably in things of no Concern to us, or wherein we are able to do nothing to any Purpoſe. Here our Adverſaries inſult over us, as if they had gain'd an entire *Victory*, and the *Field* were indiſputable; but they ſhall have no Cauſe for *Triumph*, this is no Poſt of ſuch mighty Advantage, as they fondly perſuade themſelves. This *Preſumption* ariſes from an erroneous Conceit, that all thoſe things in which they *Impertinence.*

they are little concern'd or conſulted, are Trifles below their Care or Notice, which indeed they are not by Nature ſo well able to manage. Thus, when they hear us talking to, and adviſing one another about the Order, Diſtribution and Contrivance, of *Houſhold Affairs*, about the *Regulation* of the *Family*, and *Government* of *Children* and *Servants*, the provident Management of a *Kitchen*, and the decent Ordering of a *Table*, the ſuitable Matching and convenient Diſpoſition of *Furniture*, and the like; they preſently condemn us for Impertinence. Yet they may be pleaſed to conſider, that as the Affairs of the World are now divided betwixt us, the *Domeſtick* are our Share, and out of which we are rarely ſuffer'd to interpoſe our Senſe. They may be pleaſed to conſider likewiſe, that, as light and inconſiderable as theſe things ſeem, they are capable of no Pleaſures of Senſe higher, or more refin'd, than others of *Brutes*, without our Care of 'em. For were it not for that, their Houſes wou'd be meer *Bedlams*; their moſt luxurious Treats, but a rude Confuſion of ill dige-

Commonly miſtaken.

digeſted, ill mix'd, Scents and Reliſhes; and the fine Furniture they beſtow ſo much Coſt on, but an expenſive Heap of glittering *Rubbiſh*. Thus they are beholden to us for the comfortable Enjoyment of what their Labour or good Fortune hath acquir'd or beſtow'd, and think meanly of our Care, only becauſe they underſtand not the Value of it. But if we ſhall be thought impertinent for Diſcourſes of this nature, as I deny not but we ſometimes juſtly may, when they are unſeaſonable; what Cenſure muſt thoſe Men bear, who are perpetually talking of *Politicks*, *State-Affairs* and *Grievances*, to us, in which perhaps neither they nor we are much concern'd; or if we be, are not able to propoſe, much leſs to apply, any Remedy to 'em? Surely theſe are impertinent. Not to call the *Beau* or *Poetaſter* on the *Stage* again, whoſe whole Lives are one continued Scene of Folly and Impertinence, let us make the beſt of our *News-Monger*.

Character of a Coffee-House Politician.

He is one whoſe Brains having been once over-heated, retain ſomething of the Fire in 'em ever after. He miſtakes

ſtakes his Paſſion for Zeal, and his Noiſe and Buſtling for Services. He is always full of Doubts, Fears and Jealouſies, and is never without ſome notable Diſcovery of a deep-laid Deſign, or a dangerous Plot found out in a *Meal-Tub* or *Petticoat*. He is a mighty Liſtner after *Prodigies*, and never hears of a *Whale*, or a *Comet*, but he apprehends ſome ſudden *Revolution* in the State, and looks upon a *Groaning-Board*, or a *Speaking Head*, as Forerunners of the *Day* of *Judgment*. He is a great Lover of the King, but a bitter Enemy to all about him, and thinks it impoſſible for him to have any but *evil Counſellors*; and though he be very zealous for the Government, yet he never finds any thing in it but *Grievances* and *Miſcarriages* to declaim upon. He is a Well-wiſher to the *Church*, but he is never to be reconcil'd to the *Biſhops* and *Clergy*, and rails moſt inveterately at the *Act* of *Uniformity*. He hates *Perſecution* implacably, and contends furiouſly for *Moderation*, and can ſcarce think well of the *Toleration*, becauſe it is an Act of the State. He profeſſes himſelf of the *Church* of *England*,

land, pretends to like the Worſhip of it; but he goes to Meetings in ſpight to the *Parſon* of his *Pariſh*. His *Conſcience* is very tender and ſcrupulous in Matters of Ceremony, but it is as ſteely and touchy as Brawn behind his Counter, and can digeſt any Sin of Gain. He lodges at home, but he lives at the *Coffee-Houſe*. He converſes more with *News-Papers*, *Gazettes* and *Votes*, than with his *Shop-Books*; and his conſtant Application to the *Publick*, takes him off of all Care for his *Private Concerns*. He is always ſettling the *Nation*, yet cou'd never manage his own *Family*. He is a mighty Stickler at all *Elections*; and, tho' he has no *Vote*, thinks it impoſſible any thing ſhou'd go right, unleſs he be there to Bawl for it. His Buſineſs is at *Home*, but his Thoughts are in *Flanders*, and he is earneſtly inveſting of Towns, till the *Sheriff*'s *Officers* beleagre his Doors. He is buſy in forcing of *Counterſcarps*, and ſtorming of *Breaches*, while his *Creditors* take his *Shop* by Surprize, and make Plunder of his *Goods*. Thus, by mending the *State*, he marrs his own *Fortune*; and never leaves talking

of

of the *Laws* of the *Land*, till the Execution of 'em ſilence him.

THIS Sort of Impertinents the *Coffee-Houſes* are every day full of; nay, ſo far has this contagious Impertinence ſpread itſelf, that *private Houſes* and *Shops*, nay, the very *Streets* and *Bulks*, are infected, and peſter'd with Politicks and News. Not a Pot cou'd go glibly down, or a Stitch go merrily forward, without *Namur*, a-while ago; 'twas *Spice* to *Porter*'s *Ale*, and *Wax* to the *Cobler*'s *Thread*; the one ſuſpended his Draught, and the other his Awl, to enquire what was become of the *Rogue*, and were very glad to hear he was taken, and expected, no doubt, he ſhou'd come over and make 'em a *Holiday* at his Execution. They were mightily rejoyc'd at the Arreſting of the Mareſchal *Boufflers*, and made no Queſtion but they ſhou'd ſee him amongſt the reſt of the *Beaſts* at *Bartholomew-Fair* for Twopence. This Folly of the *Mob* was in ſome meaſure excuſable, becauſe their Ignorance led 'em into an Expectation of ſeeing what had given the World ſo much Trouble.

But

But thoſe that have better Knowledge of things, have no ſuch *Plea*; they ought to have been wiſer, than to have buſied themſelves ſo much and ſo earneſtly about Affairs, which all their Care and Solicitude could have no more Influence upon, than over the Weather. 'Twas pleaſant to ſee what Shoals the Report of the Arrival of a *Holland* or *Flanders Mail* brought to the *Secretary's Office*, the *Poſt-Office*, and the *Coffee-Houſe*; every one crowding to catch the News firſt, which as ſoon as they had, they poſted away like ſo many Expreſſes to diſperſe it among their Neighbours at more Diſtance, that waited with Ears prickt up to receive 'em, or walk'd uneaſily with a fooliſh Impatience to and from the Door or Window, as if their looking out ſo often wou'd fetch 'em the ſooner. Moſt Men in their News are like *Beaus* in their Diet; the worſt is welcome while 'tis freſh and ſcarce, and the beſt is not worth a Farthing when it has been blown upon; and commonly they fare like *Beaus*, are fond of it while 'tis young and inſipid, and neglect it when 'tis grown up to

its full and true Reliſh. No ſooner is it rumour'd that a Breach is made in the *Caſtle-Wall*, or the *White Flag* hung out, but a *Council of War* is call'd in every *Coffee-Houſe* in Town; the *French* and *Dutch Prints*, their Intelligences, are call'd for immediately, and examin'd; and not a Shot is mention'd, but they ſtart as if the Ball whizz'd juſt then by their Ears. After this, follows a ſerious Debate about a General Aſſault, and whether they ſhall ſtorm immediately, or not; who ſhall begin the Attack; what Conditions ſhall be granted on Capitulation. The Caſtle of *Namur* thus taken, or ſurrender'd, they proceed to take their Meaſures and ſettle the next Campagne; and whatever Harm we ſuffer by thoſe miſchievous *French* in the Field, they are ſure to take ſufficient Revenge, and pay 'em off ſwingingly in the *Coffee-Houſe*. But as if this were not enough, our greateſt Actions muſt be buffoon'd in Shew, as well as Talk. Shall *Namur* be taken, and our Heroes of the City not ſhew their Proweſs upon ſo great an Occaſion? It muſt never be ſaid, that the *Coffee-Houſes*

dar'd

dar'd more than *Moor-Fields*; No, for the Honour of *London*, out comes the Foreman of the *Shop*, very formidable in *Buff* and *Bandileers*, and away he marches, with Feather in Cap, to the General Rendezvous in the *Artillery-Ground*. There these terrible Mimicks of *Mars* are to spend their Fury in *Noise* and *Smoak* upon a *Namur*, erected for that purpose on a *Mole-hill*, and by the Help of *Guns* and *Drums* out-stink and out-rattle *Smithfield* in all its Bravery, and wou'd be too hard for the greatest Man in all *France*, if they had him but amongst 'em. Yet this is but skirmishing, the hot Service is in another Place, when they engage the *Capons* and *Quart Pots*; never was Onset more vigorous, for they come to Handy-Blows immediately, and now is the real Cutting and Slashing, and Tilting without Quarter. Were the Towns in *Flanders* all wall'd with *Beef*, and the *French* as good Meat as *Capons*, and dress'd the same way, the King need never beat his Drums for Soldiers; all these gallant Fellows wou'd come in voluntarily, the meanest of which would be able

City Militia.

to eat a Mareſchal, and whom nothing cou'd oppoſe in Conjunction.

NOTHING is more common and familiar than this ſort of Impertinence: Moſt Men wou'd have little to do, did they buſy themſelves about nothing, but what they underſtood or were concern'd in. A Monkey is not liker a Man in his Figure, than in his Humour. How ready are all Mankind to cenſure without Authority, and to give Advice unask'd, and without Reaſon? They are very much miſtaken, that think this Forwardneſs to thruſt themſelves into others Affairs, ſprings from any Principle of Charity or Tenderneſs of 'em, or the leaſt Regard to the Welfare of their Neighbours: 'Tis only a vain Conceit, that they are wiſer, and more able to adviſe, which puts 'em upon engaging in things they have nothing to do with, and paſſing their Judgments magiſterially on Matters they have no Cognizance of, and generally little Information or Skill in. They are deſirous the World ſhou'd have as great an Opinion of 'em, as they have of them-

Officious Impertinences.

themſelves, and therefore impertinently interpoſe their own Authority and Senſe, tho' never ſo little to the purpoſe, only to ſhew how well they cou'd manage, were it their Buſineſs. Thus they adviſe without good Intention or Kindneſs, and cenſure without Deſign or Malice to the Perſons counſell'd or reflected on. Theſe buzzing Inſects ſwarm as thick every where, and are as troubleſome as *Muſkettoes* in the *Weſt-Indies*. They are perpetually in a Hurry of Buſineſs, yet are forc'd to rack their Inventions to employ their Leiſure. They are very buſy for every body, and ſerve no body. They are always in Haſte, and think themſelves expected every where with Impatience, yet come ſooner always than they are welcome. They will walk a Mile, and ſpend an Hour to tell any one how urgent their Buſineſs is, and what Haſte they are in to be gone. Their Expedition is their greateſt Loſs, for Time is the only thing that lies heavy upon their Hands. They are Walking *Gazettes*, that carry News from one Neighbour to another, and have their Stages about the

Town as regular and certain as a *Penny-Poſt-Man.* Every Man is their Acquaintance, but no Man their Friend. They drudge for every body, and are paid by no body; and though their Lives be worne out in Endeavours to oblige all Mankind, when they die no one regrets their Loſs, or miſſes their Service.

Character of a Vertuoſo.

THERE are another ſort of Impertinents, who, as they mind not the Buſineſs of other Men where it concerns 'em not, neglect it likewiſe where it does, and amuſe themſelves continually with the Contemplation of thoſe things, which the reſt of the World ſlight as uſeleſs, and below their Regard. Of theſe, the moſt egregious is the *Virtuoſo*, who is one that has ſold an Eſtate in Land, to purchaſe one in *Scallop*, *Conch*, *Muſcle*, *Cockle-Shells*, *Periwinkles*, *Sea Shrubs*, *Weeds*, *Moſſes*, *Sponges*, *Corals*, *Coralines*, *Sea-Fans*, *Pebbles*, *Marchaſites*, and *Flint-Stones*; and has abandon'd the Acquaintance and Society of Men, for that of Inſects, *Worms*, *Grubs*, *Maggots*, *Flies*, *Moths*, *Locuſts*, *Beetles*, *Spiders*, *Graſhoppers*,

hoppers, *Snails*, *Lizards* and *Tortoiſes*. His Study is like *Noah*'s Ark, the general Rendezvous of all Creatures in the *Univerſe*, and the greateſt Part of his Moveables are the Remainders of his Deluge. His Travels are not deſign'd as Viſits to the Inhabitants of any Place, but to the Pits, Shoars and Hills; from whence he fetches not the Treaſure, but the Trumpery. He is raviſh'd at finding an uncommon Shell, or an odd ſhap'd Stone, and is deſperately enamour'd at firſt Sight of an unuſual mark'd Butterfly, which he will hunt a whole Day to be Maſter of. He trafficks to all Places, and has his Correſpondents in every Part of the World; yet his Merchandizes ſerve not to promote our Luxury, nor encreaſe our Trade, and neither enrich the Nation, nor himſelf. A Box or two of *Pebbles* or *Shells*, and a Dozen of *Waſps*, *Spiders* and *Caterpillars*, are his Cargo. He values a *Camelion*, or *Salamander*'s Egg, above all the Sugars and Spices of the *Weſt* and *Eaſt-Indies*, and wou'd give more for the Shell of a *Star-Fiſh*, or *Sea-Urchin* entire, than for a whole *Dutch* Herring Fleet.

He visits Mines, Coal-Pits, and Quarries frequently, but not for that sordid End that other Men usually do, *viz.* Gain; but for the Sake of the Fossil Shells and Teeth, that are sometimes found there. He is a Smatterer at *Botany*; but for fear of being suspected of any useful Design by it, he employs his Curiosity only about *Mosses*, *Grasses*, *Brakes*, *Thistles*, *&c.* that are not accus'd of any Vertue in Medicine, which he distinguishes and divides very nicely. He preserves carefully those *Creatures* which other Men industriously destroy; and cultivates sedulously those Plants, which others root up as Weeds. He is the Embalmer of deceas'd Vermin, and dresses his Mummies with as much Care, as the ancient *Egyptians* did their Kings. His Cash consists much in old Coins, and he thinks the Face of *Alexander* in one of 'em worth more than all his Conquests. His Inventory is a List of the Insects of all Countries, and the Shells and Pebbles of all Shoars, which can no more be complete, without two or three remarkable *Signatures*, than an *Apothecary's* Shop without a *Tortoise* and

a *Cro-*

a *Crocodile*, or a Country *Barber*'s without a batter'd *Ciſtern*. A Piece of Ore with a Shell in it, is a greater Preſent than if it were fine Gold, and a String of *Wampompeag* is receiv'd with more Joy than a *Rope* of *Orient Pearl*, or *Diamonds*, wou'd be. His Collection of *Garden-Snails*, *Cockle-Shells*, and *Vermin* completed, (as he thinks) he ſets up for a *Philoſopher*, and nothing leſs than Univerſal Nature will ſerve for a Subject, of which he thinks he has an entire Hiſtory in his *Lumber-Office*. Henceforward he *ſtruts* and *ſwells*, and deſpiſes all thoſe little inſignificant Fellows, that can make no better uſe of thoſe noble inconteſtable Evidences of the Univerſal Deluge, *Scallop* and *Oyſter-Shells*, than to ſtew *Oyſters*, or melt *Brimſtone* for *Matches*. By this time he thinks it neceſſary to give the World an *Eſſay* of his Parts, that it may think as highly of 'em, (if poſſible) as he does himſelf; and finding *Moſes* hard beſet of late, he reſolves to give him a Lift, and defend his Flood, to which he is ſo much oblig'd for ſparing his darling Toys only. But, as great Maſters uſe, he corrects him

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ſometimes for not ſpeaking to his Mind, and gives him the Lye now and then, in order to ſupport his Authority. He ſhakes the World to Atoms with eaſe, which melts before him as readily as if it were nothing but a Ball of Salt. He pumps even the Center, and drains it of imaginary Stores by imaginary Loop-holes, as if punching the Globe full of Holes cou'd make his *Hypotheſis* hold Water. He is a Man of *Expedition*, and does that in few Days, which coſt *Moſes* ſome Months to complete. He is a paſſionate Admirer of his own Works, without a Rival, and ſuperciliouſly contemns all *Anſwers*; yet the leaſt Objection throws him into the Vapours. He ſets up for a grand *Philoſopher*, and palms *Hypotheſes* upon the World, which future Ages may (if they pleaſe) expect to hear his Arguments for: At preſent he is in no Humour to give 'em any other Satisfaction, than his own Word, that he is infallible. Yet thoſe that have a Faith complacent enough to take a Gentleman's Word for his own great Abilities, may perhaps be admitted to a Sight of his grand Demonſtration,

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his *Raree-Show*; the Particulars of which he repeats to 'em in a whining *Tone*, every whit as formal and merry, though not ſo muſical, as the Fellows that uſed formerly to carry *theirs at their Backs*. His ordinary Diſcourſe is of his *Travels under Ground*, in which he has gone farther (if he may be believ'd) than a whole Warren of *Coneys*. Here he began his Collection of Furniture for his Philoſophical *Toy-Shop*, which he will conclude with his Fortune, and then, like all Fleſh, revert to the Place from whence he came, and be tranſlated only from one Shop to another.

THIS, *Madam*, is another Sort of Impertinence our Sex are not liable to; one would think that none but *Madmen*, or highly *Hypochondriacal*, cou'd employ themſelves at this rate. I appeal to you, or indeed to any Man of Senſe, whether acts like the wiſer Animal; the Man that with great Care and Pains diſtinguiſhes and divides the many Varieties of Graſs, and finds no other Fruit of his Labour, than the charging of his Memory with abundance

dance of ſuperfluous Names; or the Aſs, that eats all promiſcuouſly, and without Diſtinction, to ſatisfy his *Appetite*, and ſupport *Nature?* To what purpoſe is it that theſe Gentlemen ranſack all Parts both of *Earth* and *Sea* to procure theſe *Trifles?* It is only that they may give their Names to ſome yet unchriſten'd Shell or Inſect. I know that the Deſire of Knowledge, and the Diſcovery of Things yet unknown, is the Pretence; but what Knowledge is it? What Diſcoveries do we owe to their Labours? It is only the Diſcovery of ſome few unheeded Varieties of Plants, Shells, or Inſects, unheeded only becauſe uſeleſs; and the Knowledge they boaſt ſo much of, is no more than a Regiſter of their Names, and Marks of Diſtinction only. It is enough for them to know that a *Silk-Worm* is a ſort of *Caterpillar*; that, when it is come to Maturity, weaves a *Web*, is metamorphos'd to a *Moth-Fly*, lays Eggs, and ſo dies. They leave all further Enquiry to the Unlearned and Mechanicks, whoſe Buſineſs only they think it to proſecute Matters of Gain and Profit. Let them con-

contrive, if they can, to make this *Silk* ſerviceable to *Mankind*; their *Speculations* have another Scope, which is the founding ſome wild, uncertain, conjectural *Hypotheſis*, which may be true or falſe, yet Mankind neither Gainers nor Loſers either way a Tittle in Point of *Wiſdom* or *Convenience*. Theſe Men are juſt the Reverſe of a *Rattle-Snake*, and carry in their *Heads* what he does in his *Tail*, and move Laughter rather than Regard. What Improvements of *Phyſick*, or any uſeful Arts; what noble Remedies, what ſerviceable Inſtruments, have theſe *Muſhroom* and *Cockle-Shell* Hunters oblig'd the World with? For I am ready to recant, if they can ſhew ſo good a Medicine as ſtew'd *Prunes*, or ſo neceſſary an Inſtrument as a *Fly-Flap*, of their own Invention and Diſcovery. Yet theſe are the Men of exalted Underſtandings, the Men of elevated Capacities and ſublime Speculations, that dignify and diſtinguiſh themſelves from the reſt of the World by ſpecious Names and pompous Titles, and continue notwithſtanding as very *Reptiles* in Senſe, as thoſe they converſe ſo much with.

I WOULD not have any body mistake me so far, as to think I would in the least reflect upon any sincere and intelligent Enquirer into Nature, of which I as heartily wish a better Knowledge as any *Virtuoso* of 'em all. You can be my Witness, *Madam*, that I us'd to say, I thought Mr. *Boyle* more honourable for his learned Labours, than for his noble Birth; and that the *Royal Society*, by their great and celebrated Performances, were an illustrious Argument of the Wisdom of the *August* Prince, their Founder, of happy *Memory*; and that they highly merited the *Esteem*, *Respect*, and *Honour*, paid 'em by the Lovers of Learning all *Europe* over. But tho' I have a very great Veneration for the *Society* in general, I can't but put a vast Difference between the particular Members that compose it. Were *Supererogation* a Doctrine in Fashion, 'tis probable some of em might borrow of their Fellows Merit enough to justify their Arrogance: But, alas, they are come an Age too late for that Trick; they are fallen into a faithless in-

incredulous Generation of Men, that will give Credit no farther than the visible Stock will extend: And tho' a *Virtuoso* should swell a Title-Page even till it burst with large Promises, and sonorous Titles, the World is so ill-natur'd as not to think a whit the better of a Book for it. 'Tis an ill Time to trade with implicit Faith, when so many have so lately been broken by an Over-stock of that *Commodity*: No sooner now-a-days can a Man write or steal an Hypothesis, and promise Demonstration for it hereafter, in this or the next World, but out comes some malicious Answer or other, with Reasons in Hand against it, overthrows the Credit of it, and puts the poor Author into Fits. For tho' a great Philosopher, that has written a Book of Three Shillings, may reasonably insult and despise a Sixpenny Answer, yet the Indignity of so low-pric'd a Refutation would make a *Stoick* fret, and *frisk* like a Cow with a Breeze in her Tail, or a Man bitten by a *Tarantula*. Men measure themselves by their *Vanity*, and are greater or less in their own Opinions, according

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ing to the Proportion they have of it; if they be well ſtock'd with it, it may be eaſy to confute, but impoſſible to convince 'em. He therefore that would ſet up for a great Man, ought firſt to be plentifully provided of it, and then a Score of *Cockle-Shells*, a Dozen of *Hodmandods*, or any Trifle elſe, is a ſufficient Foundation to build a Reputation upon. But if a Man ſhall abdicate his lawful Calling in pure Affection to theſe things, and has for ſome Years ſpent all the Time and Money he was Maſter of in Proſecution of this Paſſion, and ſhall after all hear his *Caterpillars* affronted, and his *Butterflies* irreverently ſpoken of, it muſt be more provoking to him, than 'tis to a *Lion* to be pull'd by the *Beard*. And if, when to crown all his Labours, he has diſcover'd a Water ſo near a-kin to the famous one, that cou'd be kept in nothing but the Hoof of an Aſs, that it was never found but in the *Skull* of the ſame *Animal*; a Water that makes no more of melting a *World*, than a *Dutch-man* does of a *Firkin* of *Butter*; and when he has written a Book of Diſcoveries and

Wonders

Wonders thereupon; if (I ſay) the impertinent Scribblers of the Age will ſtill be demanding *Proofs*, and writing *Anſwers*, he has Reaſon to throw down his *Pen* in a Rage, and pronounce the World, that could give him ſuch an Interruption, unworthy to be bleſs'd with his future Labours, and breathe eternal Defiance to it, as irreconcilable as the Quarrel of the Sons of *OEdipus*. To which prudent Reſolution, let us leave him till he can recover his Temper.

THESE Inſtances, *Madam*, will (I hope) ſuffice to ſhew that Men are themſelves altogether as impertinent, as they malicioufly miſrepreſent us. It is not for want of Plenty of others that I content myſelf with theſe; but I am not willing to trouble you with any of an inferior Character. Theſe are all Impertinents of *Mark* and *Note*, and have ſeverally the good Fortune to find Crowds of *Fools* of their own Sex to applaud and admire them. *Impertinence* is a Failing that has its *Root* in *Nature*; but is not worth laughing at, till it has receiv'd the finiſhing

Stroaks of Art. A Man through natural Defects may do abundance of incoherent, fooliſh Actions, yet deſerve *Compaſſion* and *Advice*, rather than *Deriſion*. But to ſee Men ſpending their Fortunes, as well as Lives, in a Courſe of *regular Folly*, and with an induſtrious as well as expenſive Idleneſs, running through tedious *Syſtems* of Impertinence, wou'd have ſplit the Sides of *Heraclitus*, had it been his Fortune to have been a Spectator. 'Tis very eaſy to decide which of theſe *Impertinents* is the moſt ſignal; the *Vertuoſo* is manifeſtly without a Competitor. For our Follies are not to be meaſur'd by the Degree of *Ignorance* that appears in 'em, but by the Study, Labour and Expence they coſt us to finiſh and complete 'em. So that the more Regularity and Artifice there appears in any of our Extravagancies, the greater is the Folly of 'em. Upon this Score it is, that the laſt mention'd deſervedly claim the Preference to all others; they have improv'd ſo well their Amuſements into an Art, that the *Credulous* and *Ignorant* are induc'd to believe there is ſome ſecret Vertue,

ſome

ſome hidden Myſtery in thoſe darling Toys of theirs; when all their Buſtling amounts to no more than a learned *Impertinence*, (for ſo they abuſe the Term) and all they teach Men is but a ſpecious expenſive Method of throwing away both Time and Money.

I INTEND not in what remains to trouble you with any more ſuch Inſtances; becauſe I am ſenſible theſe have already ſwell'd this *Letter* to a *Volume*, which was not at firſt my Intent. I ſhall therefore diſpatch the remaining Part of the Charge in as few Words as poſſible. Amongſt the reſt, *Diſſimulation* is none of the leaſt *Blemiſhes*, which they endeavour to fix upon us. This Quality, though it can't upon any Occaſion deſerve the Name of a *Vertue*, yet, according to the preſent Conſtitution of the World, is many times abſolutely neceſſary, and is a main Ingredient in the Compoſition of Human Prudence. It is indeed oftentimes criminal, but it is only accidentally ſo, as Induſtry, Wit, and moſt other good Qualities may be, according to the Ends and Purpoſes

Diſſimulation become neceſſary.

to which they are miſemploy'd. *Diſſimulation* is nothing but the hiding, or diſguiſing, our ſecret Thoughts or Inclinations under another Appearance. I ſhall not endeavour to abſolve our Sex wholly from all Uſe of this Quality, or Art, (call it which you pleaſe) becauſe I think it may, upon many Occaſions, be uſed with Innocence enough, and upon ſome can't, without great Imprudence, be omitted. The World is too full of *Craft*, *Malice* and *Violence*, for abſolute *Simplicity* to live in it. It behoves therefore our Sex, as well the other, to live with ſo much Caution and Circumſpection, in regard to their own Security, that their Thoughts and Inclinations may not be ſeen ſo naked, as to expoſe them to the *Snares*, *Deſigns*, and *Practices* of *crafty Knaves*, who would make a Property of 'em, or lay 'em open to the wicked *Efforts* and miſchievous Impreſſions of *Envy* or *Malice*, whoſe Pleaſure ſprings from the Hurt of others. Nothing gives our Adverſaries ſo great an Advantage over us, as the Knowledge of our Opinions and Affections, with ſomething agreeable

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to which they will be ſure to bait all their Traps and Devices. For this Reaſon it is, that it has been proverbially ſaid of Old, that *He that knows not how to diſſemble, knows not how to live.* The Experience of all Ages ſince has confirm'd this Obſervation, and ours no leſs than any of the preceding. This premis'd, I ſuppoſe no wiſe Man will blame our Sex for the Uſe of an Art ſo neceſſary to preſerve 'em from becoming a *Prey* to every deſigning Man; an Art of which himſelf muſt make great uſe to deſerve that Title. Yet I am afraid, that upon Enquiry, our Sex will not be found to have ſo much of it as is requiſite, at leaſt not generally; our ſedentary Life, and the narrow Limits to which our Acquaintance and Buſineſs are circumſcrib'd, afford us ſo little Variety, ſo regular a Face of things, that we want the Means of obtaining the Maſtery of ſo uſeful an Art, which no queſtion but we ſhould as ſoon acquire as Men, had we but equal Opportunities. Hence it is, that *Women* are more apt to ſhew their *Reſentments* upon all *Provocations* than *Men*, and are thought

naturally more *peeviſh* and *captious*, by thoſe that apprehend not the true Reaſon: Whereas *Men* are altogether as *Stomachful*, and take *Offence* as ſoon; but they cover and ſuppreſs their Indignation better, not with a Deſign to forget any Injury receiv'd, but to wreak their *Revenge* more covertly and effectually. This is another Advantage Men derive from Liberty of Converſation and promiſcuous Buſineſs, wherein the Variety of Contingences they have to provide againſt, and the Diverſity of Tempers they deal with, force 'em to turn and wind themſelves into all *Shapes*, and accommodate themſelves to all Humours. There is indeed yet a higher Sort of *Diſſimulation*, which is always *Criminal*, that is, when Men not only cloud their real *Sentiments* and Intentions, but make Profeſſion of, and ſeem zealouſly to affect the contrary: This by a more proper and reſtrain'd Name is call'd *Deceit*, and is always us'd in an ill Senſe. This Art is moſt practis'd in Courts, where *Policy* and *Ambition* reign; there you may ſee *Enemies* hugging and careſſing one another with

with all outward *Expreſſions* of *Tenderneſs* and *Friendſhip* imaginable, while they are ſecretly contriving each other's Ruin. There you may ſee Men cringing to thoſe they wou'd *ſpurn* if they durſt, and *flattering* thoſe they deſpiſe and rail at behind their *Backs*. The Court is a Place where we come very rarely otherwiſe than as *Spectators*, not as *Actors*; as *Ornaments*, not as *Inſtruments*; and therefore are ſeldom involv'd in the guilty Practices of it. Nor is it the Court only, but all Places are infected with this Vice, where there is any Encouragement of Profit or Pleaſure to be hop'd from ſucceſsful Treachery, of which no Place is ſo barren as not to afford ſome. This Deceit is ſo far from being the Vice of our Sex, that they are the common Object on which it is daily practis'd: Nothing is more frequently met with than falſe *Love* in Men, which is now grown ſo familiar, that a Company of Six of both Sexes can ſcarce meet, but a *ſham Paſſion* commences immediately, is urg'd, proteſted, and ſworn to

Falſe Love commonly practis'd.

be real with all imaginable Violence. If these false Arts, Mock-Sighing and Dying, prevail upon any fooliſh, eaſy, credulous *Woman*, the *Sham Lover* is blown up with the Succeſs; he is big and in Labour till he be deliver'd of the Secret, which with great Satisfaction he proclaims in all Places where he comes: 'Tis his higheſt Exploit of *Gallantry*, which he will by no means loſe the Credit of. Thus he thinks her Ruin a Step to Reputation, and founds his own Honour upon her Infamy. This, *Madam*, is the baſeſt of Treachery; for they are not ſatisfied with the Succeſs of their falſe Promiſes and Oaths, but they inſult over the Weakneſs of a too fond *Woman*, and *triumph* in her Diſhonour. I am ſorry there are any *Women* ſo fooliſh and forward, as to give Hopes and Encouragement to ſuch ungenerous Fellows; yet we may be aſſur'd, that they are not a quarter ſo many as thoſe vain *Boaſters* wou'd make 'em. Much more may be ſaid on this Head, but that I think it high time to paſs on to the next, which is *Enviouſneſs*, ſo foul a Blot

to

to a fair Character, that no Merit can waſh it out, or atone ſufficiently for it.

Envy is the Parent of *Calumny*, and the Daughter of *Jealouſy*. Men ſeldom envy others, till they fear being out-ſtrip'd by 'em in Fortune or Reputation. It is the moſt criminal, becauſe the moſt injurious to Vertue and Worth of all our natural Failings, againſt which its Malice is generally bent. This Vice and *Jealouſy* ſeem to be more particularly hated of *Providence* than any other; for they carry their Puniſhment inſeparably along with 'em. The Envious and the Jealous need no other Tormentors than their own Thoughts. The Envious Man ruins his own, to diſturb another's Tranquillity; and ſacrifices his own Happineſs and Repoſe, to a perverſe Deſire of troubling his Neighbour's. He feeds like *Toads* upon the Venom of the Earth, and ſucks in Scandal greedily, that he may at Pleaſure diſgorge it to the greater Annoyance of other Men. His Mind has the *Vapours*; a ſweet Report of any one throws it

it into Convulſions and Agonies, and a foul one is the Relief and Refreſhment of it. A wholſome Air, free from the Blaſts of *Detraction* and *Slander*, is as certainly pernicious to him, as *Ireland* to *Frogs* and *Toads*. This Vice is generally diſclaim'd by both Sexes, yet generally practis'd by both. Men love as little to have their Reputation as their Chimneys over-topt by their Neighbours; for they think by that means their Names become dark, as their Houſes do ſmoaky by the other: Yet, thro' a lazy Malignity, had rather pull the others down to their Level, than build their own up higher. This Humour prevails indeed, yet not in equal Meaſure in both Sexes. For as we have confeſſedly leſs *Ambition*, ſo have we apparently leſs of this Poiſon which uſually attends it, and ariſes from a ſelf-intereſted Principle, which makes 'em endeavour, by baſe ſiniſter Means, to level that Merit which they think ſtands in their Way to Preferment, and which they deſpair of being able to ſurmount by honourable Attempts. For what need any one uſe baſe Slights

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to ſtop the Man, whom by fair Speed he thought he cou'd overtake. No ſooner is any Man rais'd to any Eminence in the World, but half the Sex at leaſt join in Confederacy to raiſe a Battery of Scandal againſt him, to bring him down again. *Honour* is the *Pillory* of great Deſert, whither a Man is no ſooner rais'd, but the vile Raſcally inferior Crowd gather immediately together to throw Dirt at him, and make that which was intended as a Grace and Reward, but a more honourable Puniſhment. Our Sex ſeldom arrive to this Pitch of Envy, our Ambition is more bounded, and our Deſires ſooner ſatisfied. Hence it is, that we are leſs troubled at the Proſperity of others; for not giving ourſelves the Liberty of aiming at things far out of our Power, they are the ſooner compaſs'd, and we the ſooner at Eaſe. He that thinks himſelf happy, is incapable of envying another's Felicity, ſince he ſees him poſſeſs'd of nothing which either he has not, or deſpiſes not. Yet it muſt be confeſs'd, that the leſſer Piques and Grudgings are daily to be met with among

among us, but no leſs among Men. What is it that ſpawns daily ſuch Fries of *Satyriſts* without Wit, and *Criticks* without Judgment, but this Humour of carping and nibbling at the Reputation of others? But they are generally abundantly furniſh'd with Impudence, a good Quality, that commonly ſupplies largely the Want of all other.

Character of a City Critick.

A *Critick* of this Sort is one that, for want of *Wit*, ſets up for *Judgment*; yet he has ſo much Ambition to be thought a *Wit*, that he lets his *Spleen* prevail againſt *Nature*, and turns *Poet*. In this Capacity he is as juſt to the World, as in the other injurious. For as the *Critick* wrong'd every body in his Cenſure, and ſnarl'd and grinn'd at their Writings, the *Poet* gives 'em Opportunity to do themſelves Juſtice, to return the Compliment, and laugh at, or deſpiſe his. He wants nothing but Wit to fit him for a *Satyriſt*, yet he has *Gall* and *Vanity* enough to diſpenſe with that Want, and write without it. His Works are *Libels* upon others, but *Satyrs* upon himſelf;

and

and while they *bark* at Men of *Wit*, call him Fool that write 'em. He takes his Malice for a Muſe, and thinks himſelf inſpir'd when he is only *poſſeſs'd* and blown up with a *Flatus* of *Envy* and *Vanity*. His great Helps to Poetry are *Crambo* and *Arithmetick*, by which he aſpires to Rhime and Numbers, yet miſtakes frequently in the Tale of his Fingers. He has a very great *Antipathy* to his own Species, and hates to ſee a Fool any where but in his Glaſs. For (as he ſays) they *provoke* him, *and offend his Eyes:* He *follows 'em as a Dog purſues his Prey, and barks whene're* He *ſmells 'em in his Way:* He *knows to ſay no more* that *Wit is ſcarce, to gingle out a Rhime, or tag a Verſe, or Cobble wretched Proſe to numerous Lines: There if* he *has a Genius, there it ſhines.* His Fund of *Criticiſm* is a Sett of Terms of Art pickt out of the *French Criticks*, or their Tranſlators; and his *Poetical* Stock is a Common-Place of certain *Forms* and *Manners* of Expreſſion. He writes better in *Verſe* than *Proſe*; for in that there is *Rhime*, in this neither *Rhime* nor *Reaſon.* He talks much of the

among us, but no leſs among Men. What is it that ſpawns daily ſuch Fries of *Satyriſts* without Wit, and *Criticks* without Judgment, but this Humour of carping and nibbling at the Reputation of others? But they are generally abundantly furniſh'd with Impudence, a good Quality, that commonly ſupplies largely the Want of all other.

Character of a City Critick.

A *Critick* of this Sort is one that, for want of *Wit*, ſets up for *Judgment*; yet he has ſo much Ambition to be thought a *Wit*, that he lets his *Spleen* prevail againſt *Nature*, and turns *Poet*. In this Capacity he is as juſt to the World, as in the other injurious. For as the *Critick* wrong'd every body in his Cenſure, and ſnarl'd and grinn'd at their Writings, the *Poet* gives 'em Opportunity to do themſelves Juſtice, to return the Compliment, and laugh at, or deſpiſe his. He wants nothing but Wit to fit him for a *Satyriſt*, yet he has *Gall* and *Vanity* enough to diſpenſe with that Want, and write without it. His Works are *Libels* upon others, but *Satyrs* upon himſelf;

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the *Naïveté* of his Thoughts, which appears ſufficient in the Dulneſs of 'em; yet nothing but the *Phlegmatick*, ſpiritleſs *Air* is his own. He rails at Mr. *Oldham* for want of Breeding and good Manners, without a Grain of either, and ſteals his own Wit to beſpatter him with; but, like an ill *Chymiſt*, he lets the *Spirit* fly off in drawing over, and retains only the *Phlegm*. He cenſures Mr. *Cowley* for too much *Wit*, and corrects him with none. The Difference between Mr. *Cowley* and him is this; the one has too much Wit, and too fine for the Standard; the other not enough to blanch his baſe Metal, or cover the Braſs of his Counterfeits. To complete himſelf in the Formalities of *Parnaſſus*, he falls in Love, and tells the World it is oblig'd to his *Paſſion* for his *Poetry*; but if his *Miſtreſs* prove no more indulgent than his *Muſe*, his Amour is like to conclude but unluckily. For if his Love be no warmer than his Lines, his *Corinna* may play with his Flame without Danger of Burning. He pretends to have written only his ſincereſt Thoughts: I don't know how well

well his Miſtreſs may take that from the *Lover*; but I dare ſwear the World did not expect it from the Poet. He is happieſt at the Picture of a rhiming Fool, for he need only to look in his Glaſs, and he may copy a Country *Wit* from the City Original. If this rhiming Humour laſts, there's a good *Sugar-Jobber* ſpoil'd for an ill *Poet*; yet, for his Comfort, Time, Improvement, and two or three Books more, may raiſe him to Rival *E — S —* and ſing *London*'s Triumphs, to the Envy of *Tom Jordan* of happy Memory.

You may wonder, *Madam*, why I ſhou'd give you the Trouble of this Character, after I had given you my Word to trouble you with no more of this nature. I muſt confeſs, I am ſorry that ſo fooliſh an Occaſion cou'd make me forget myſelf; but a Book newly publiſh'd happening juſt at this Juncture unluckily to fall into my Hands, I cou'd not without Indignation ſee the Scurrility and Inſolence with which Mr. *Oldham* and Mr. *Cowley* are treated; and cou'd not but reſent a little the Wrongs done to the

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Memory of Men, whom the reſt of the World, with Juſtice, admire; and cou'd not help taking notice, upon ſo fair an Opportunity, that they are not, tho' dead, to be ſo rudely play'd with, and made the May-Game of e'ry *Splenetick Boy*. There are ſome yet living, whoſe Wit and Performances deſerve a more reſpectful Treatment, than they have met with from him: But they are able to revenge their own Quarrel, if they think he deſerves the Honour to be ſcourg'd by 'em. Nothing but Envy and a vain Conceit of himſelf could move him to attack the Reputation of Men, whoſe Verſe will always command Admiration, while his own raiſe nothing but Scorn and Indignation: If his Bookſeller were but bleſt with half a dozen ſuch Authors, he wou'd in a ſhort time infallibly be *Stationer*-General to all the *Grocers* and *Tobacconiſts* in the Town.

After this Digreſſion, *Madam*, let us return to our Subject. We ſtand yet charg'd with *Levity* and *Inconſtancy*, two Failings ſo nearly related, and

ſo

ſo generally united, that it is hard to treat of 'em apart; we will therefore conſider 'em briefly together. *Levity* is an unſteddy Humour, that makes Men like and diſlike, ſeek and reject frequently the ſame things upon ſlender or no Reaſons. This is the Humour of the Infancy of both Sexes, and proceeds from the Strength of their Appetites, and the Weakneſs of their Judgments. At theſe tender Years, every thing we ſee moves our Curioſities; and becauſe we think little beyond our Appetites, deſire impatiently whatever pleaſes. This wears off in proportion to the Growth of our Judgments, when we begin to conſider the Fatigue, Hazard, Diſreputation, and other Inconveniences that attend unreaſonable or inordinate Deſires. Herein our Sex have a manifeſt Advantage over the other; for it is confeſs'd on all hands, that our Judgments ripen ſooner than theirs; whence of courſe it follows, that this Folly prevails not ſo long upon us as them. 'Tis yet true, that even the moſt experienc'd and wiſeſt of us have no ſmall Mixture of it, which appears

in the greateſt Part of our Actions. But it is certain likewiſe, that Men have a greater Proportion of it than we. From this it is, that *Novelty* derives all its Charms, and that Men purſue with ſo much Eagerneſs and Impatience what they ſo ſoon ſlight if obtain'd. I appeal to the Experience of all Mankind, if they do not generally frame to themſelves much greater Idea's of any thing they deſire, and are unacquainted with, than they find real, when they become familiar to 'em; and if they did not imagine greater Pleaſures while they were in Purſuit, than they met with after they were in Poſſeſſion of their Wiſhes. The Imagery of *Fancy* is, like ſome Paintings, raviſhing and ſurprizing at a due Diſtance; but approach 'em near, and all the Charms of Beauty vaniſh, and they appear rough and unpleaſant. Hence it is, that Men grow uneaſy, and their Deſires pall ſo ſoon upon the full Enjoyment of their Wiſhes; they ſee then the Imperfections as well as Beauties of what they coveted, which glitter'd ſo far off, and, like the Moon, appear'd

all

Luſtre and Smoothneſs; but when arriv'd at, all dark and uneven. Theſe Fallacies Men are more ſubjected to than we, by thoſe very Privileges which give them in ſome things the Advantage over us. The Variety of Buſineſs, and Society they run through, the large Acquaintance they contract, give 'em Encouragement to aſpire to, and Hopes to obtain many difficult Things, which our Sex ſeldom lift their Thoughts up to. I know this aſpiring Humour of theirs is generally call'd *Ambition*, and I allow the Term to be proper; but their Ambition works upon their Levity, which only can make them barter certain Eaſe, Peace and Security, for uncertain Pomp and Splendor; and forſake a Condition they know to be good, for one they know no more of, than that it ſhines, and that it glitters, and ſo part with the true Jewel for the falſe one. Theſe are the ſerious and applauded Follies of Mankind, and ſhew the Weakneſs and Levity of thoſe we call the greateſt and wiſeſt Men, that ſacrifice the Eaſe and Pleaſure of their Lives to *popular*

popular Breath, and ſounding Titles, which is like bartring a ſmall Diamond for a large Glaſs Bubble.

Inconſtancy is ſo like *Levity*, that little more needs to be ſaid of it, only that it is commonly reſtrain'd to the Change of Affections in regard to Perſons, and ſo is chiefly concern'd in Love and Friendſhip. It is founded upon Levity, thro' which we firſt make an injudicious Choice, and are afterwards as unreaſonably diſguſted with it. This happens oftner in *Love* than *Friendſhip*, becauſe the Impreſſions of *Love* are more ſuddenly receiv'd, and the Effects of it more violent, than thoſe of *Friendſhip*; and the Deſires which are commonly kindled by one ſingle Perfection, ſuch as *Beauty* or *Wit*, not being ſuddenly anſwer'd, are in proceſs of Time extinguiſh'd, or abated by Obſervation of ſome diſguſtful Imperfection or other in the Perſon belov'd. This is indeed the true Reaſon why *Love*, which is generally ſo hot at firſt, cools commonly ſo ſuddenly; becauſe being generally the Iſſue of Fancy, not Judgment,

ment, it is grounded upon an over-great Opinion of thoſe Perfections, which firſt ſtrike us, and which fall in our Eſteem upon more mature Examination. From whence it is likewiſe, that Men are leſs conſtant in their Affections than we; for Beauty only being generally the Object of their Paſſion, the Effect muſt neceſſarily be as fading as the Cauſe; their Love therefore being only the Reſult of Wonder and Surprize, is abated by Familiarity, and decays as they wear off by degrees. Beſides, that a Love ſo founded is liable to be raviſh'd by any ſuperior Beauty; or, if not ſo, yet the Novelty of the former once worne off, the new Comer has the Aſſiſtance of Fancy, the Slave of Novelty, to gain the Superiority. This is the Cauſe why ſo few real and laſting Paſſions are found amongſt Men: For Charms, depending upon, and owing their Power to Fancy, can maintain no Conqueſts any longer than That is on their Side, which is as inconſtant as the Wind. In this alſo we are leſs faulty than they; for, not uſually fixing our Affection on ſo

Women conſtanter Lovers.

mutable a Thing as the *Beauty* of a *Face*, which a thouſand Accidents may deſtroy, but on *Wit*, *good Humour*, and other *Graces* of the *Mind*, as well as of the *Body*, our Love is more durable and conſtant in proportion to the longer Continuance of thoſe Qualities in the Object. Neither indeed have we the Means or Temptation to be fickle and inconſtant ſo ready as Men have; for Modeſty, and the Rules of Decency obſerv'd among us, not permitting to us the Liberty of declaring our Sentiments to thoſe we love, as Men may, we dare not indulge a wanton Fancy, or rambling Inclination, which muſt be ſtifled in our own Breaſts, and cou'd only give us a hopeleſs Anxiety, unleſs we were able to inſpire the ſame Paſſion for us in them; which it were vain to expect, without breaking thro' all Reſtraint of *Modeſty* and *Decorum*, at the Price of our Fame and Reputation, which I hope few are ſo daring as to venture. Beſides this, our Tempers are by Nature calm, ſedate, and tender, not apt to be ruffled and diſturb'd by Paſſions, and too fearful to

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enterprize any thing in Satisfaction of 'em: Theirs on the contrary, bold, active, and uneven, eaſily ſuſceptible of all manner of Deſires, and readily executing any Deſigns to gratify 'em. Thus are we debarr'd the Liberty of chooſing for ourſelves, and confin'd to pleaſe ourſelves out of the number that like and addreſs to us; of which if we fix our Affections upon any one, we are generally fix'd and unmoveable, as having neither the Inclination to, nor Opportunity of Inconſtancy, that the Men have. I don't deny, but that there may be ſome among us guilty of this Fault, but they are vaſtly ſhort of the Number of Men involv'd in the like Guilt; amongſt whom it is now grown ſo faſhionable, that 'tis become no Scandal; but is daily juſtified, and the Treachery boaſted of as high Gallantry. The Crimes therefore of ſome few *Women* ought to be no Reproach to the Sex in general. Of Infidelity in Friendſhip, I ſhall ſay little, becauſe I think there are ſo few Inſtances of any thing that deſerve the Name, that ſcarce any Age has been ſo fruitful as to produce

two Pair of real and true Friends.

Friendſhip. I know that the Name is commonly given to ſuch as are link'd by any Ties of Conſanguinity, Affinity, Intereſt, mutual Obligations, Acquaintance, and the like: But theſe are ſuch Friendſhips (if they may be call'd ſo) as are always contracted with a tacit Reſerve to Intereſt on both Sides, and ſeldom laſt longer than the Proſperity of either Party, and during that are frequently renounc'd upon ſlight Diſobligations, or languiſh and die of themſelves. Yet, if I may preſume to give my Opinion in a Caſe, where Matter of Fact does not appear, I think we ſhou'd be the more faithful even in this too: For as we are leſs concern'd in the Affairs of the World, ſo we have leſs Temptation from Intereſt to be falſe to our Friends. Neither are we ſo likely to be falſe thro' Fear, becauſe our Sex are ſeldom engag'd in matters of any Danger. For theſe Reaſons it is, our Sex are generally more hearty and ſincere in the ordinary Friendſhips they make than Men, among whom they are uſually clogg'd with ſo many Conſiderations

Women truer Friends than Men.

of

of Intereſt and Punctilio's of Honour; to which laſt perhaps are owing the greateſt Part of thoſe honourable Actions which are miſtakenly imputed to Friendſhip. For ſomething done to ſalve Honour, commonly puts a Period to all Friendſhip with unfortunate Perſons, whom Men think they may afterward grow cold to without Reproach.

THESE are the moſt conſiderable Imperfections, or at leaſt thoſe which with moſt Colour of Reaſon are charg'd upon us as general Defects; and I hope, *Madam*, I have fairly ſhewn, that the other Sex are both by Intereſt and Inclination more expos'd and more ſubject to 'em than we. *Pride*, *Luſt*, *Cruelty*, and many more, are by the Declaimers againſt us thrown into the Scale to make Weight and bear us down, but with ſuch manifeſt Injuſtice, that without giving myſelf any farther Trouble, I dare appeal to any reaſonable *Man*, and leave him to decide the Difference. I know there was a *Tullia*, a *Claudia*, and a *Meſſalina*; there was likewiſe a *Sardana-*

More ill Men than Women.

danapalus, a *Nero*, a *Caligula*; but if the Sexes in general are to be approach'd with and meaſur'd by theſe, Human Race is certainly the vileſt Part of the Creation. 'Tis very ill *Logick* to argue from Particulars to Generals, and where the Premiſſes are ſingular, to conclude univerſally: But if they will allow us the Liberty they take themſelves, and come to numbering the Vicious of both Sexes, they will certainly out-poll us by infinite Numbers. It were therefore better Policy ſurely in them to quit a Way of Arguing, which is at once ſo falſe, and ſo much to the Diſadvantage of the Cauſe they contend for; and when they can, by ſound Arguments, make out any Advantages their Sex has over ours, other than what I have already granted, I am ready to be convinc'd and become their Convert; and I make no doubt but every ingenious Man will do as much by me. Thus I have endeavour'd to vindicate our Sex, from the unjuſt Imputations with which ſome unreaſonable malicious Men would load us: For I am willing to think the greater, or at leaſt

leaſt the better Part of their Sex, more generous than to encourage their Scandal. There remains nothing more, but to ſhew that there are ſome neceſſary Qnalifications to be acquir'd, ſome good Improvements to be made by ingenious *Gentlemen* in the Company of our Sex.

Many Advantages from Womens Company.

Of this Number are *Complaiſance*, *Gallantry*, *good Humour*, *Invention*, and *an Art* which (tho' frequently abus'd) is of admirable Uſe to thoſe that are Maſters of it, the *Art* of *Inſinuation*, and many others. 'Tis true, a Man may be an honeſt and underſtanding Man, without any of theſe Qualifications; but he can hardly be a Polite, a Well-bred, and Agreeable-taking Man, without all, or moſt of theſe. Without 'em, *Honeſty*, *Courage*, or *Wit*, are like rough *Diamonds*, or *Gold* in the *Ore*; they have their intrinſick Value and Worth before, but they are doubtful and obſcure till they are Poliſh'd, Refin'd, and receive *Luſtre* and *Eſteem* from theſe.

Complaiſance to be learnt by it.

THE Principal of theſe is *Complaiſance*, a good Quality, without which, in a competent Meaſure, no Man is fitted for Society. This is beſt learnt in our Company, where all Men affect Gaiety, and endeavour to be agreeable. *State-News*, *Politicks*, *Religion*, or private *Buſineſs*, take up the greateſt part of their Converſation, when they are among themſelves only. Theſe are Subjects that employ their Paſſions too much to leave any room for *Complaiſance*; they raiſe too much Heat to ſuffer Men to be eaſy and pleaſant; and Men are too eaſy when they talk of 'em to ſuppreſs their natural Temper, which are apt to break out upon any Oppoſition. Men are as apt to defend their Opinions as their Property, and wou'd take it as well to have their Titles to their Eſtates queſtion'd as their Senſe; and perhaps in that they imitate the Conduct of our Sex, and do like indulgent Mothers, who are moſt tender of thoſe Children that are weakeſt. But however it be, I have obſerv'd when ſuch Arguments have been introduc'd even in our Company, and by Men

that

that affected Indifference and abundance of Temper, that very few have been able to ſhew ſo much Maſtery, but that ſomething appear'd either in their Air, or Expreſſion, or in the Tone of their Voices, which argu'd a greater Warmth and Concern, than is proper for the Converſation of *Gentlemen*, or the Company of *Ladies*. Theſe Uneaſineſſes happen not ſo often among us, becauſe the Men look upon us to have very little Intereſt in the Publick Affairs of the World, and therefore trouble us very ſeldom with their grave ſerious Trifles, which they debate with ſo much Earneſtneſs among one another. They look upon us as Things deſign'd and contriv'd only for their Pleaſure, and therefore uſe us tenderly, as Children do their Favourite Bawbles. They talk gaily and pleaſantly to us; they do or ſay nothing that may give us any Diſguſt or *Chagrin*; they put on their chearfulleſt Looks, and their beſt Humour, that they may excite the like in us: They never oppoſe us, but with a great deal of Ceremony, or in Raillery, not out of a Spirit of

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Oppoſition, (as they frequently do one another) but to maintain a pleaſant Argument, or heighten, by Variety of Opinions, an agreeable Entertainment. Mirth and good Humour reign generally in our Society, good Manners always; for with us Men ſhew in a manner the Reverſe of what they are one to another: They let their Thoughts play at Liberty, and are very careful of the Expreſſion, that nothing harſh or obſcene can eſcape 'em, that may ſhock a tender Mind, or offend a modeſt Ear: This Caution it is, which is the Root of *Complaiſance*, which is nothing but a Deſire to oblige People, by complying with their Humours. 'Tis true, ſome Tempers are too obſtinate and froward, ever to arrive at any great Height of this good Quality; yet there is nothing ſo ſtubborn but it may be bent. Aſſiduity and conſtant Practice will contract ſuch Habits, as will make any thing eaſy and familiar, even to the worſt contriv'd Diſpoſition; but where Nature concurrs, Men are ſoon perfect. This is one great Advantage Men reap by our Society, nor is it to

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be deſpiſed by the wiſeſt of 'em, who know the Uſe of this Accompliſhment, and are ſenſible that it is hardly, if at all, to be acquir'd, but by converſing with us; for tho' Men may have Wit and Judgment, yet the Liberty they take of thwarting and oppoſing one another, makes 'em eager and diſputative, impatient, ſowre, and moroſe; till by converſing with us, they grow inſenſibly aſham'd of ſuch Ruſtick Freedom. The Truth of this is evident from the Obſervation of the *Univerſities*, and *Inns* of *Court*; I mean thoſe Students in 'em that lead a more recluſe and Monaſtick Life, and converſe little with our Sex: They want neither Wit nor Learning, and frequently neither Generoſity nor Good-Nature; yet when they come into gay, tho' ingenious Company, are either damp'd and ſilent, or unſeaſonably frolickſome and free; ſo that they appear either dull or ridiculous.

Gallantry acquir'd by our Company.

NOR is *Complaiſance* the only thing theſe Men want; they want likewiſe the *Gallantry* of thoſe Men that frequent-

quent our Company. This Quality is the Height and Perfection of Civility, without which it is either Languiſhing or Formal, and with which it appears always with an engaging Air of Kindneſs and Good-Will. It ſets a Value upon the moſt inconſiderable Trifles, and turns every Civility into an Obligation. For in ordinary Familiarities, and civil Correſpondences, we regard not ſo much what, as how things are done; the Manner is more look'd upon, than the Matter of ſuch Courteſies. Almoſt all Men that have had a liberal and good Education, know what is due to good Manners and civil Company. But till they have been us'd a little to our Society, their Modeſty ſits like Conſtraint upon 'em, and looks like a forc'd Compliance to uneaſy Rules, and Forms of Civility. Converſing frequently with us makes 'em familiar to Men; and when they are convinc'd as well of the Eaſineſs, as the Neceſſity of 'em, they are ſoon reconcil'd to the Practice. This Point once gain'd, they become expert in the common and neceſſary Practices. Thoſe

that

have any natural Bravery of Mind, will never be contented to ſtop there; Indifference is too cold and phlegmatick a Thing for 'em; a little formal Ceremony and common Civilities, ſuch as are paid to every one of courſe, will not ſatisfy their ambitious Spirits, which will put 'em upon endeavouring for better Receptions, and obliging thoſe, whom they can't, without Reproach to themſelves, offend. This is the original and firſt Spring of *Gallantry*, which is an Humour of obliging all People, as well in our Actions as Words. It differs from *Complaiſance*, this being more active, that more paſſive: This inclines us to oblige, by doing or ſaying after our own Humours ſuch things as we think will pleaſe; that by ſubmitting to, and following, theirs. A Man may be *complaiſant* without *Gallantry*; but he can't be *gallant* without *Complaiſance*. For 'tis poſſible to pleaſe, and be agreeable, without ſhewing our own Humours to others; but 'tis impoſſible without ſome Regard to theirs: Yet this

Difference betwixt Complaiſance and Gallantry.

Pleaſure will be but faint and languid, without a Mixture of both. This Mixture of Freedom, Obſervance, and a Deſire of pleaſing, when rightly tempered, is the true Compoſition of *Gallantry*; of which, whoever is complete Maſter, can never fail of being both admir'd and belov'd. This Accompliſhment is beſt, if not only to be, acquir'd by converſing with us; for beſides the natural Deference which the Males of every obſervable Species of the Creation pay to their Females, and the Reaſons before given for *Complaiſance*, which all hold good here, there is a tender Softneſs in the Frame of our Minds, as well as in the Conſtitution of our Bodies, which inſpires Men, a Sex more rugged, with the like Sentiments and Affections, and infuſes gently and inſenſibly a Care to oblige, and a Concern not to offend us.

Invention improv'd by our Society.

HENCE it is that they employ all their *Art*, *Wit*, and *Invention*, to

to ſay and do things, that may appear to us ſurprizing and agreeable, either for their Novelty or Contrivance. The very End and Nature of Converſation among us retrench abundance of thoſe things, which make the greateſt Part of Men's Diſcourſe; and they find themſelves oblig'd to ſtrain their Inventions, to fetch, from other Springs, Streams proper to entertain us with. This puts 'em upon beating and ranging over the Fields of Fancy to find ſomething new, ſomething pretty to offer to us, and by this means refine, at the ſame time, their Wit, and enlarge and extend their Invention; for by forcing 'em out of the common Road, they are neceſſitated to invent new Arguments, and ſeek new Ways to divert and pleaſe us; and by reſtraining the large Liberty they take one with another, they are compell'd to poliſh their Wit, and file off the Roughneſs of it. To this they owe, the Neatneſs of Raillery, to which abundance of Gentlemen are now arriv'd: For

Contrariety of Opinions, being that which gives Life and Spirit to Converſation, as well Women as Men, do frequently hold Arguments contrary to their real Opinions, only to heigthen the Diverſion, and improve the Pleaſure of Society. In theſe the utmoſt Care is taken to avoid all things that may ſound harſh, offenſive, or indecent; their Wit is employ'd only to raiſe Mirth, and promote good Humour; Conditions that can't well be obſerv'd, when Men contend for Realities, and diſpute for the Reputation of their Wit or Judgment, and the Truth of their Opinions. 'Tis true, theſe Improvements are to be made only by Men that have by Nature an improveable Stock of Wit and good Senſe; for thoſe that have it not, being unable to diſtinguiſh what is proper for their Imitation, are apt to ape us in thoſe Things which are the peculiar Graces and Ornaments of our Sex, and which are the immediate Objects of Sight, and need no further Reflection or Thinking.

Fools not fit Companions for Women.

This

This Affectation is notorious in our Modern *Beau*'s, who obſerving the Care taken by ſome of our Sex in the ſetting off their Perſons, without penetrating any further into the Reaſons Women have for it, or conſidering that what became them might be ridiculous in themſelves, fall to licking, ſprucing and dreſſing their Campagne Faces, and ill-contriv'd Bodies, that now, like all fooliſh Imitators, they out-do the Originals, and out-powder, out-patch, and out-paint the vaineſt and moſt extravagant of our Sex at thoſe Follies, and are perpetually cocking, bruſtling, twiring, and making Grimaces, as if they expected we ſhou'd make Addreſſes to 'em in a ſhort time. Yet ought not this to diſcourage any ingenious Perſon, or bring any Scandal upon our Converſation, any more than Travelling ought to be brought into Diſrepute; becauſe it is obſerv'd that thoſe who go *abroad Fools, return Fops.* It is not in our Power to alter Nature, but to poliſh it; and

if an Aſs has learnt all his Paces, 'tis as much as the thing is capable of; 'twere abſurd to expect he ſhou'd chop *Logick*. This is ſo far from being an Objection againſt us, that it is an Argument that none but ingenious Men are duly qualified to converſe with us; who, by our Means have not only been fitted and finiſh'd for great things, but have actually aſpir'd to 'em. For 'tis my Opinion, that we owe the neat, genteel Raillery, in Sir *George Etheredge* and Sir *Charles Sedley's* Plays, and the gallant Verſes of Mr. *Waller*, to their Converſing much with Ladies. And I remember an Opinion of a very ingenious Perſon, who aſcribes the Ruin of the *Spaniſh Grandeur*, in great meaſure, to the Ridiculing, in the Perſon of *Don Quixot*, the *Gallantry* of that *Nation* toward their *Ladies*. This Opinion, however ingenious, carries me beyond the Scope and Deſign of the preſent Argument; and therefore I ſhall leave all further Conſideration of it to thoſe that are

more

more at leiſure, and leſs weary than I am at preſent.

THERE remain yet ſome things to be ſpoken to, but I muſt confeſs to you, *Madam*, that I am already very much tired, and I have reaſon to fear that you are more. When you enjoin'd me this Task, I believe you did not expect, I am ſure I did not intend, ſo long a Letter. I know I have written too much, yet I leave you to judge whether it be enough. One Experience I have gain'd by this Eſſay, that I find, when our Hands are in, 'tis as hard to ſtop 'em, as our Tongues, and as difficult not to write, as not to talk too much. I have done wondring at thoſe Men that can write huge Volumes upon ſlender Subjects, and ſhall hereafter admire their Judgment only who can confine their Imaginations, and curb their wandring Fancies. I pretend no Obligation upon our Sex for this Attempt in their Defence, becauſe it was undertaken at your Com-

mand, and for your Diverſion only; which if I have in any meaſure ſatisfied, I have my Ambition, and ſhall beg nothing further, than that my ready Obedience may excuſe the mean Performance of,

Madam,

Your real Friend, and

Moſt humble Servant.

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